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DOVETON.

VOL. I.

D O V E T O N ;

OR,

THE MAN OF MANY IMPULSES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JERNINGHAM."

"I speak
Of what I know and what we feel within."
WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL.
BOOKSELLERS TO THEIR MAJESTIES.

1837.

461.



LONDON:
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DEDICATION.

TO MARY — — —

OH! for a giant's strength to build a tower—

A cloud-surmounting tower of piled thought,
Laughing to scorn the vainly-boasted power

Of time, to shake the fabric I had wrought—
That I might write thy name upon its base,
With a proud look of triumph on my face.

But this poor feeble, tottering thing of nought,
This crumbling heap of unabiding dust,
Is all unworthy of thee; and mistrust
Creeps into my desponding heart as now,
With pale face, weary eyes, and throbbing brow,
I look upon the little I have done,

Until I almost think that thou, *the one*,
Whose praise were sweeter to me than all fame,
Will pity me, and turn aside with shame,
For thy poor friend's sad weakness.—What to me
Were a world's verdict, if condemned by thee?

II.

Oh! would that I could sing as Petrarch sung,
Pouring his soul out in a flood of rhyme,
Mighty as his great passion, which nor time,
Nor myriad-handed circumstance has flung
Into the limbo of forgotten things—
Oh! for such power, that thy dear name might be
Embalmed for ever in sweet poetry—
But I—what can I do?—my feeble wings
Flutter, and droop after their flutterings,
Till my soul faints within me, and, whene'er
I look into the future, I see there
Nothing but utter failure and despair.

III.

But, what, if I should fail?—Are there not things
More worthy of my great endeavourings

Than this poor tinsel-glittering bauble—fame?
Friendship, and love, and holiness, and rest—
Are not these things more blessing and more blest?
And knowledge courted, not for what it brings,
But for its own dear sake? I know 'tis wise
To walk along the earth with downcast eyes,
Stifling our sky-ward yearnings. There are gems,
Earth-born, as bright as starry diadems:
Joy-giving love is common as the air;
And love's food—beauty,—is strewn everywhere.
Love!—how light all things are, which men desire,
Weighed against love!—fame lightest. I aspire
To win for my poor self a poet's crown;
Only because it would be passing sweet
To take it from my brows, and lay it down
Humbly at thy dear feet.

IV.

'T were a small tribute—what to thee I owe:
None but ourselves and our Creator know—
There was a youth, who, ever since his birth,
Had walked in perilous darkness o'er the earth;
Against the sharp stones dashing his bare feet,

Until, upon his way, he chanced to meet
A gentle saint, who, in her upraised hand,
Held a bright torch, which o'er the rugged land,
Lighted his stumbling footsteps ; and the youth
Was led into the saving paths of truth
By this sweet saint ; and from a darker fate
Than death was rescued, ere it was too late.
What wonder, then, that the poor youth, as now
He treads his torch-illuminated path, should vow
To dedicate his powers to her, and take
The staff into his hand for her dear sake ;
And pilgrim-like to journey on beside
His gentle torch-bearer—his saint-like guide,
'Tis a sweet tale, and yet a tale of truth—
Thou art the gentle saint, and I the youth.

J. W. K.

DOVETON.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN.

“ I bear a memory of a pleasant life,
Whose small events I can recall.”

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

It is the crown of my ambition to write a book, which I shall never repent of having written, and which no good man will condemn ; a book, which in its many pages shall contain nothing that is inordinate—a book, which shall be full of truth, not suffering the calm voice of benignant nature to be over-awed by the loud clamours of a too forward imagination.

With the worst passions of man, I will have nothing to do in this book. I will have no revenge, no blood-thirstiness, no hatred even to the death. I know not what it avails to write of these evil things—if in reality they exist not, 'twere worse than folly to create them ; if they do exist, what kind heart would desire to be reminded of their existence ?

Is not composure better than excitement ? Is it not nobler and wiser to melt the heart than to stir the passions ? Oh ! give me the pictures of Claude Lorraine, and banish those of Salvator Rosa : for now would I bathe my spirit in gentleness, and cast out all unworthy feelings of pride, bitterness, and discontent ; and begin, as it were, a new life in the pages of this book, proposing to myself an end, perhaps too mighty for my weakness to accomplish, but supporting myself, in all my doubts, with the one clear reflection, that it is nobler to be worsted in a conflict with a giant, than to succeed in the demolition of a pigmy.

Thinking, as I do, that peace, and love, and content, and fortitude, and great forbearance, are themes not unworthy of being discoursed upon, and being assured that they exist everywhere, for here is more real goodness in the world than mankind is wont to admit, " I willingly confine—

and here go I for assistance to one, whose pupil I am proud to account myself—

“ I willingly confine
 My narrative to subjects that excite
 Feelings with these accordant ; love, esteem,
 And admiration ; lifting up a veil,
 A sunbeam introducing among hearts
 Retired and covert ; so that ye shall have
 Clear images before your gladdened eyes,
 Of nature's unambitious underwood,
 And flowers that prosper in the shade. And when
 I speak of such among my flock as swerved,
 Or fell, them only will I single out,
 Upon whose lapse or error something more
 Than brotherly forgiveness may attend :
 To such will we restrict our notice ; else
 Better my tongue were mute.” *

I am about to write of myself and of my associates, to lay before my readers the analysis of an individual mind, perhaps somewhat strangely constituted ; to speak of all the workings and misworkings of a complicated piece of machinery, not altogether constructed upon false principles, but exhibiting many errors in the detail, which have impeded its full operation and marred the general unity of the design.

I never see a little child in all the beauty of its primitive innocence without endeavouring — yet

* Wordsworth's Excursion.

how vain the endeavour!—to recall some of my earliest sensations—to feel as I once felt ere time's contaminating fingers had soiled the purity of my young mind. What a blank, almost unchequered is all that I can remember of those years. There are dim recollections floating in my brain of wide nurseries and many attendants, and crimson cushions, whereon I used to roll, and of toys almost innumerable, and of a carriage, and a large square with tall dingy houses on each side, and swarms of people walking before them. Little else does my memory body forth of the first five years of my existence. My earliest associations are connected with huge brick houses and teeming thoroughfares, for I was born in the metropolis of England.

“I was reared .

In the great city .—

And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.”*

My father was a London merchant, and he failed when I was five years old. I have heard it said that he was an indifferent man of business; but I am quite sure that he was a honest one. He was of a sanguine, speculative nature, very easily imposed upon, and stone deaf to the warnings of experience. I do not think that great speculators are often men of integrity; but my

* S. T. Coleridge.

father was an exception to the general rule, risking no man's money but his own, and paying twenty shillings in the pound shortly after his name appeared in the gazette. He was sadly shocked by the mischance of his bankruptcy, never having calculated the probabilities of such an untoward event, and having always, for he was of an indolent habit, shrunk from any thing like an investigation, he became acquainted with the embarrassment of his affairs just in time to know that it was hopeless. Then he bestirred himself, and looked about him, and found that he was a ruined man.

It is probable that if my father's mind had been differently constituted, he might even then have saved himself at the eleventh hour. But he was utterly destitute of decision; there was no force, no energy in his character. When the prospect before him was cheering, he was sanguine, even to exuberance; but the first glimmering of adversity,—the first, I mean, of which he was sensible, for he was eminently short-sighted,—plunged him into the slough of despondency so deeply, that he never could extricate himself. And thus it was, that upon the present occasion, it did not for one moment occur to him that, by making a stand against the difficulties he saw approaching, he might probably repel them altogether. When the clouds of adversity gathered

over him, his heart died within him, and his only desire was to betake himself into solitude, if possible, with an unblemished reputation.

“Take all that I have,” said my father, “my lands, my tenements, my all. Strip my house of its furniture, nay, take the very books from my shelves ! but leave me, leave me to my repose.”

And so it happened, that they *did* take his lands, and his tenements, and his furniture, and his books, every one of which was a drop of blood from his heart ; and the world said that he was an honest man ; and when they had made him a poor one, then they left him to his repose.

He was not sorry to leave the metropolis behind him. Quiet was now the one thing needful to my father. His health was gone, and he was utterly without hope, and well content would he have been to have drawn his cloak over his face, and to have laid himself down to die.

But I am writing in a melancholy strain, and as I would not that this sombre tinting should disfigure more than a tittle of my canvass, I will cease to speak of my afflicted father, for I cannot dwell upon the circumstances of his life, or analyse the morbid constitution of his mind, acted upon as it was by the evil influences of

“ Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty,”

with any other than most painful feelings, which I

would not willingly communicate at the very outset of my narrative to the reader. Let me speak, then, of other members of my family.

My mother was the only child of an Indian officer, who was slain at the taking of Seringapatam. She had a settlement of about four hundred a-year, upon which, with the trifling addition of a small annuity belonging to my poor father, we were now destined to live; the collective pronoun including my parents and four children, of which I was the penultimate; for although we were in reality five in number, my elder brother, whose name was Walter, had fortunately been gazetted a few months before my father, not indeed as a bankrupt, but as an ensign in a marching regiment, so that at the period of our exode from the metropolis, there were, as I have said, four of us, male and female, equally divided.

My brother Walter was the eldest of the family; him I have disposed of in the army: then came my two sisters, whose names were Laura and Fanny, and then, *longo intervallo*, myself, whom they christened Gerard, and little Arthur, who was the pet and the plaything, and certainly the fairest flower by far in our human garden.

And thus reader, I have introduced thee, one and all, to the Doveton family. We six left the city behind us, and turned our faces towards the West.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOMESTEAD.

“ A still retreat
Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,
Secluded, but not buried.”

WORDSWORTH.

THROUGH Berkshire—and I clapped my hands, looking at Virginia Water. Through Hampshire, of which I remember nothing but a trout-stream, intersecting the road. Through Wiltshire, where the “ star-y-pointing ” spire of Sarum’s magnificent cathedral gladdened my young sight. Through Somersetshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, until we came to the borders of the * * * ; we travelled onward, and there we halted.

“ I would end my days here,” said my father,

as he stood before a small dwelling-house, on one of the sweetest spots in the world, and read the tempting monosyllables "to let," upon a board erected in front of it.

"It is too lonely," said my mother. "I think so," said both my sisters. I crowed with delight.

My mother chid me, for I was not a favourite. I was silent; but I raised my eyes, and looked meaningly into my father's face. I longed to say, "Be resolute; this is the place for us."

My father opened the garden gate, and walked slowly towards the house. The house stood upon an eminence, commanding a magnificent view; and my father stopped once or twice, as he ascended the hill, to admire the prospect beneath him. I remember all this, as though it had happened but yesterday. My mother stood at the lower gate, with Arthur and my two sisters. I ran up the hill, beside my father, but he took no notice of me. "Let us live here," I whispered; but he did not hear me. His lips moved slightly, and I thought that he said "Beautiful!"

It was summer; the air was warm, the flowers were sweet, and the birds were singing.

The tears gushed into my eyes. I was a mere child; but I was full of susceptibility—and I thought that I was unloved. All around me, the earth, the air, the sky, were so full of blessings, that I felt, for the first time in my life, a yearning

after perfect happiness, and I said to myself "What avails it that these things are so beautiful, whilst I am unloved?"

My father entered the house. There was a little arbour in the garden, skirted all round with jasmine; and there I went in, and seated myself down, and wept. I thought that I heard somebody calling me; but I made no answer.

My head was between my hands, resting on a rustic table, which stood within the arbour. I felt something pulling me by the skirt of my frock; I looked up; there was my little brother Arthur, all smiles, all cheerfulness, all beauty.

"Arthur," I said, "do you love me?"

"Yes; yes; very much," said Arthur, who could scarcely speak plain, "but mamma call—mamma want you—mamma angry."

I cared about no one's anger; I only thought of Arthur's love. I inclined my head and kissed my baby-brother; and felt quite happy for a moment.

"Come along, Jerry—they are waiting—you have been so long in the summer-house," said Arthur, in the best manner he could, endeavouring to drag me along by an effort of his tiny hand.

I rejoined the party at the garden-gate, to which my father had by this time returned. Four different voices spake harshly to me. I was threatened with a chastisement, but I feared not. My

eyes were fixed upon my brother's face, and I saw the tears rolling down it. His little hand was still within mine; I pressed it. They took him away from me.

But I felt the truth of what the poet has written ;—

“ There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
’Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart :” •

for though I rejoiced but in the love of a child, there was exceeding comfort in that love.

I was not aware that I had sate for so long a time in the summer-house : but I now learned that during my absence from the party, they had gone on a tour of inspection through the house : and I listened, with eager attention, to acquaint myself with the nature of their verdict. My father was enraptured. In his whole life, he had never beheld a dwelling-place more after his own heart. It was absolute perfection in his eyes—the aspect, the situation, the view, the house itself, and the garden. And then there was a nice little room with glass doors, and niches for book-shelves, which would just do for his study ; and moreover, it was so delightfully secluded, three miles, at least, from the town, and not on the high-road, and beautiful, as beautiful could be. It was cer-

• Wordsworth.

tainly the place, of all others, in which he would most wish to set up his rest.

My mother said that the house was well enough but having "wished that it was nearer the town," she was proceeding to descant forcibly upon the advantages of a suburban residence, when my father interrupted her, exclaiming in a voice of unusual firmness,

"I declare to God, my dear Jane, that I will never again *live in a street*, so it's no use trying to persuade me."

This speech delivered, as it was, with an energy quite miraculous in my father, made me hope that now at least he was about to stand up for his right. But there was nothing in the world which he more hated than an argument, especially when there was any chance of its ending in contumely, as most arguments do : and many a point did he yield to my mother, in the very teeth of his own judgment, because, in his estimation, it was better to yield than to struggle. "Better," saith Solomon, "is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife." And this was my father's philosophy ; nor do I think that he lacked wisdom for encouraging it.

Yet on this occasion I thought that he would be resolute ; though it must be confessed, that for one man to set himself up against three women, in

wordy warfare, a species of contention in which they so eminently excel, requires an effort of courage by no means of an ordinary nature. Besides, my mother was a first-rate disputant, a very Hercules in controversy, whilst each of my sisters stood ready, like Iolas with the hot iron in his hand, to cauterize the arguments of the adversary,—the Hydra's heads, which Mr. Doveton was demolishing.

"I declare to God," said my father, "that I will never again *live in a street*. It's no use trying to persuade me : I would as soon live in a prison ;" and Mr. Doveton assumed an air of determination which did not particularly become him, but which was not without its effect.

"But we might live nearer the town, without living in a street," replied my mother, and this truism was so obvious to the understandings of my two sisters, that they both of them uttered simultaneously the three monosyllables, "So we might."

What followed I do not precisely remember. Both parties were somewhat contumacious. My mother said there was no "neighbourhood," the meaning of which assertion my father did not at first comprehend. My elder sister explained, and was astonished when my father observed, that what they looked upon as an objection, he regarded as a recommendation. The town of * * *,

which in these volumes shall be known by the name of Merry-vale, was just three miles distant from the plot of ground on which we were standing. My mother thought three miles a distance almost interminable; she had never walked so far in her life; neither had my sisters' pedestrian excursions, more than once or twice, been further extended; but my father, accustomed every day to walk backward and forward between the neighbourhood of Regent's Park and the City, thought nothing of the distance; besides, as he pertinently remarked, exercise is a fine thing for the health, and the walk every day would do them good.

"This Merry-vale appears to me a poor place enough," said my mother.

"Horrid!" cried my sister Laura, "there is not a shop in the place."

"It seems to be full of shops," said my father, drily, "and the market is very well supplied."

"I mean milliners' shops," replied Laura, who delighted in a little finery, and fancied herself a beauty, which she was not.

"Nor a library worth subscribing to," said Fanny, who was a great reader of trash, which she called "polite literature," a name to which it was by no means entitled.

Just at this moment the rattling of carriage-wheels was heard, and in less than a minute a

smart equipage, with three bay horses and a grey, dashed by at a tremendous pace, exciting a cloud of dust, which was not very readily dissipated. Two young gentlemen sate upon the box, one of whom acted as coachman, with all the ease of a practised whip: just as he passed our group, he was, in the language of the road, "springing them," that is to say, letting his horses gallop freely down hill, so that the impetus of the rapid descent might impel them partially up the eminence in advance of them. They were both of them dressed with more attention to eccentricity than to elegance, and I particularly remember that the coachman wore a white hat, with an immoderate brim, and a pair of green spectacles, or goggles.

"There goes the mail!" said my father, wiping the dust out of his eyes as he spoke.

This exclamation was not, it must be acknowledged, indicative of very great sagacity. My sisters smiled,³ and my mother laughed. "The mail!" they all three cried together.

"The Mail!—and why not?" asked my father.

"Because," replied Mrs. Doveton sarcastically,—"because, my dear, the mail likes best to keep to the high road, and seldom indulges in a digression."

"Besides," added my sister Laura, asserting

that which was not indeed so self-evident a truism as her mother's—"young gentlemen, in white hats, are not in the habit of driving stages."

"I am not so sure of that," said my father. "But your mother is quite right."

The three ladies then began to wonder who the gentlemen, on the coach-box, could be—"young noblemen, or baronets' sons, at least." My mother was beginning to think, that what she had said about "no neighbourhood," was not quite so correct, after all. A countryman passed by, and my mother stopped him, that he might solve her doubts, upon a point of such immediate importance.

"I don't see that it matters," said my father.

But my mother did, and had my father known all, he would have thought so too; for already did his female adversaries begin to slacken in their opposition to his wishes relating to the dwelling-house before us.

The "carriage and four," was the property of Sir Willoughby Euston, Bart.; and the young gentlemen on the box were his sons.

Moreover, my mother ascertained that Sir Willoughby's seat, Fox Hall, was only one mile distant from Meadow-bank, by which name its proprietor had distinguished the house, which my father was so ambitious of tenanting.

I will not take upon me positively to state that

this circumstance of the carriage-and-four, was the sole cause of my mother's withholding her opposition to the will of my father, respecting the house, but I apprehend that a series of deductions, very skilfully drawn therefrom, had the effect of eliciting her acquiescence. There was one great person in the neighbourhood; and, there being one, it was probable that there were others, as great people were gregarious by nature. It was evident, therefore, that there was "a neighbourhood;" and it was equally plain, that there must be shops—good shops in Merry-vale—for wherever there were rich people, there were sure to be good shops—and as rich people were idle people, and idle people could not do better than read novels all day, there must have been a good library in Merry-vale; and for similar reasons a good milliner; and thus all these three amiable logicians were satisfied, and my father became the tenant of Meadow-bank.

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CHAPTER III.

THE UNLOVED ONE.

‘Tis very plain,
Some soft spots had their birth in me at first,
If not love, say like love.”

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

I WAS about seven years of age, when we first went to live near Merry-vale. My sisters were many years older; they were just on the borders of womanhood, comely though not actually beautiful, and far from being over-burthened with intellect. My little brother was four years my junior and lovely enough to serve as a model for a sculptor, who would carve an infant Adonis, or body forth the childhood of a god.

It was the curse of my boyhood, to be com-

panionless. I felt the bitterness of solitude in the very spring-time of my existence. Neither father nor mother loved me; too plainly did my young eyes see this. I was quick to observe, and to interpret. Child as I then was, I knew well enough how to read the human countenance, like a book, and to find a history in the tones of a voice. And it was this very knowledge which made me wretched; for the eye kindled not looking upon me; the voice softened not addressing me; the step quickened not approaching me. I felt that I was alone in the world.

Oh! indeed it is a hard lot, to ask for love, and be denied—to bestow, yet not to receive—to see that lavished upon another, which we cannot attract towards ourselves—to yearn after things forbidden, until the poor heart is sinking with despair—to wander here and there, exclaiming in the touching language of the desolate poet

“ Why was I born for love, and love denied to me ? ”

And all this was I doomed to suffer. I was full of love—my father, my mother, my sisters, I loved them all,—and my little brother I adored; but, not one of them returned my affection; for Arthur’s semblance of love had passed away with the first dawn of his boyhood. It was natural that little Arthur should have been the favourite of the

family; he was the youngest, and the most beautiful, and it was said that he was like his mother, though, for my part, I saw not the resemblance. But I thank my God that I was not jealous; I desired not to subtract one tittle from the love that was lavished upon Arthur; I only asked "Is there none left? Oh! can ye not bestow a little upon me, without taking from my brother?"

I blame no one. It may appear strange to some, that loving I was unloved, and it may be thought that those around me were destitute of natural affection. But it was not so. My poor father was broken down in body and in mind. Neither hope nor health did he enjoy. The memory of his misfortunes was fresh upon him, and keenly were those misfortunes felt. He endeavoured to forget them, but he could not. He tried to shut out all those thoughts which might tend, by the force of association, to awaken in his mind a sense of the change that had lately taken place; and for this purpose he shut himself up, rarely emerging, save at meal-times, from the precincts of his private study, and attempting to absorb his mind in the prosecution of some self-imposed labour. He was a man of the keenest sensibility; indeed, so tender were his feelings, that he found it necessary to play the hypocrite, and to throw a cloak over them, lest they should

betray him into excesses. And feeling the necessity of this, he assumed a garb of indifference, sometimes exchanged for one of austerity, until from cheating others, he turned to an attempt to cheat himself. Yet he was not altogether successful; for let art do what it may, nature will peep out at times.

As for myself it was not often that he chid me, for I was not often in his presence; but he rarely or never caressed me; indeed, he caressed no one: he seemed to be entirely self-involved, betraying no violent emotions of any kind, but apparently preserving his mind in a state of constant equilibrium: he scarcely ever spoke to me, and if he loved, his love was not mirrored in his actions.

And my mother poured upon Arthur the full cup of her affection, till not one drop of love remained at the bottom of the chalice for me. She was proud of her younger son, and brought him forward upon every occasion. She curled his hair with her own fingers; she dressed him and she undressed him; she sang him every night to sleep and waked him with a kiss in the morning; his crib was beside her bed; his picture was over the mantel-shelf; his childish sayings were ever in her mouth. Happy Arthur! what would I not have given for one of those kind words, which fell in unheeded showers upon thee?

Let nobody blame my mother. It is impossible that any parent should love all her children alike. We cannot control the wanderings of the affections : we cannot love in spite of ourselves. “ The soule is often led by secret motions, and loves she knowes not why. There are impulsive privacies, which urge us to a liking even against the Parliam^tall acts of the two Houses, Reason and the Common Sense.” *

The truth, without a metaphor, is this—that there was every reason why my mother should have preferred Arthur before me ; she could not help it, and she *did* prefer him ; and preferring him she was too sincere, too honest to conceal her preference. She could not discipline her affections, but she could avoid playing the hypocrite ; and thus it was that she *spoiled* Arthur, whilst I was utterly neglected. God forbid that I should blame any one for yielding to the tide of love. Love in any shape is too excellent to be censured.

As for my sisters, they had just reached the age at which the “poms and vanities of the world” are most powerful to monopolize and to beguile the young heart. They were just beginning to be adults. And if at any period of our lives a little self-importance be excusable, it is surely when our new-born honours of maturity are encircled with

their first radiance, which experience, who is the sworn foe of vanity, has not yet had time to bedim. There is nothing very condemnable in this. My sisters were just beginning to be women ; and it must be confessed that they felt the full importance of their position ; so much so, that thinking of themselves, as they did, they had no time to think about me. I was looked upon as utterly unworthy of a thought from either one or the other of the sisterhood.

Time wore on, and we became settled at Meadow-bank, and the people round about came to call upon us, and Lady Willoughby Euston left her card ; and my mother said that there was a neighbourhood ; and Sir Willoughby having heard my father say that he had never handled a gun in his life, gave him full permission to shoot over his manor ; and the young Eustons, Reginald and Wilfred, called in at Meadow-bank now and then to make fun of my sisters ; and Fanny fell in love with their names, and Laura fell in love with them ; and years passed over my sisters' heads, and still they were the Miss Dovetons ; and Arthur lost a moiety of his beauty, and my mother dropped a moiety of her love ; and Walter got his lieutenancy ; and I was sent off to school, and altogether we were tolerably comfortable.

But nothing happened during that time to induce me to prolong this chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY.

“ 'Tis often thus ;
You see the dreamer sitting hand-in-hand
With one who never dreams ; the restless spirit
Curbing his own hot haste, lest he outstrip
His lazy-pacing friend.”

MS.

I WAS sent to a large school about ninety miles distant from Merry-vale. I was then twelve years old, tall, passably good-looking, and not so backward in my learning, but that I could translate an ode of Horace, and write Latin verses with the aid of a *Gradus* and a Dictionary. I ought to have been rather a fine-looking boy ; but my mother, who thought that one head of hair beside her own was quite enough for her to preside over,

very prudently cut off all my curls, thereby much destroying my beauty. And then, again, I was very well made, being straight and broad-shouldered, with round, tapering limbs well put together, and feet and hands, of which any one might have been proud. But my clothes, unfortunately for my appearance, were always so abominably made, that I looked awkward and shambling, and retained not externally one trace of kind nature's symmetrical handy-work. An old waistcoat of my father's cut down, or a spencer converted into a jacket, or any other strange mutation of this sort, did "quite well enough for Gerard," whilst Arthur flaunted it in gay attire, in a tunic of green velvet, and a cap of the same material, with a gold band and a tassel to match, and a belt of morocco leather fastened with a silver buckle round his waist. These are sore trials, it must be confessed, for the philosophy of a sensitive boy.

But I was sent to school, and a new field was opened for the disporting of my affections. "Here," said I, "are multitudes to love; I may choose here; it cannot be possible that all these will turn away from me. I shall find some to love me at last," and these reflections made me very happy, and I began to look around me for a friend.

I was very impatient to consummate the happiness which I had so long been yearning to enjoy

Yet I determined to do nothing inconsiderately, and resolved therefore to survey my companions one and all ere I made my election among so many. My examination was of course confined to the external attributes of my school-fellows. But this was quite enough for me. I had never formed an idea of friendship unconnected with beauty, and now that the reality, as I thought, of what I had so long been dreaming of, was actually within my reach, I naturally began to look about me for the most pleasing countenances and to make my selection amongst them. I knew nothing about schoolboy etiquette. I was all nature; the cramping fetters of conventional thralldom had never yet, for one moment, controlled the excursions of my young mind. I had never checked the exuberance of my feelings; I had never balanced my words, nor set any restraint upon my actions, nor feared to betray my emotions, however extravagant they may have been. I was all openness and simplicity. I knew not what it was to be a hypocrite.

I traversed the playing fields and entered the school-room without feeling the least uneasiness. No body appeared to notice me, and certainly no one molested me. Fear is the result of knowledge; I was ignorant and had no fear. I thought that all the boys were like myself; I had no other notion of a schoolboy.

I went about from place to place, scrutinizing, with a "modest assurance," the countenances of all whom I meet. At length, my eyes alighted upon a face, which appeared to me almost perfect; it belonged to a boy of about my own years; it was fair, and it was radiant with smiles.

I continued to look at the boy, his figure was very elegant: he moved, and he was full of grace. I heard him speak, and his voice was musical.

I was just upon the point of addressing this boy, when I heard my own name pronounced, and felt a hand upon my shoulder—"Doveton!" I turned round, and confronted a tall, stout youth, apparently about seventeen years old, with a bland, honest countenance, not remarkable for its beauty, nor of a particularly intellectual cast, but open, manly, and benevolent in its expression. He was one of the biggest boys I had seen, and I took him for a junior usher.

"Doveton!"

"Yes, Sir," said I.

"Don't call me *Sir*," returned the boy. "We are all on an equality here—all school-fellows together. The masters you may call, '*Sir*,' but me you must call *Smith*—*John Smith*—for there are other *Smiths* in the school."

I made no answer, for I knew not why *Smith* had addressed me; but he did not suffer me to

to remain in my ignorance, for he presently continued,

“Doveton, I have been requested by Dr. Good-enough,” (such was the name of our preceptor,) “to take notice of you, and to protect you, and to initiate you in the ways of the school. As you are young and have no friends I may probably be of some use to you. When you want any thing, come to me. You know my name,—John Smith. I will see that you have justice in the school.”

I did not quite understand this. I had heard something about *fagging* at school, but my ideas upon the subject were very vague. So I said to Smith, “You mean, then, that I am to be your fag, and that you are to be my master?”

“My good fellow, I mean nothing of the kind. We have no fagging in this school,” replied Smith. “You are to be my *client*, as the doctor calls it. The thing is customary here. Whenever a new boy comes, he is entrusted to the care of one of us seniors. The fact is, you are to be my *protégé*, and that I am to be your friend.”

“My friend!—you will love me, then?”

Smith smiled. “I dare say that I shall *like* you well enough. But don’t talk about *loving* here; the boys will laugh at you if you do.”

I thought all this very odd; but I said nothing, and Smith resumed, “You have never been to school before, I see this well enough. You have

been reading some trashy novels instead of Latin and Greek."

"No," said I.

"Then what have you read?"

"Shakspeare."

"Ah!" said Smith, "pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses."

I did not understand this last speech. It seemed to me a jumble of words, without any distinctive meaning. To tell the truth, I was not disposed to regard this Smith with much affection; there appeared to be a sad want of delicacy and refinement in all he said. I did not admire him, because, although I knew it not, I was at this period of my life most essentially an egotist. I was romantic, and I could not help thinking that all people were bound to be the same. But I felt very grateful to my new protector, and would have done any thing to testify my gratitude.

"Well, Doveton, remember what I've told you," continued Smith, about to depart,—“Is there any thing I can do for you now? Be candid and tell me if there is.”

"Yes," said I, and I pointed to the fair-faced boy, whose beauty had arrested my attention just before the coming of Smith: "be so good as to tell me the name of that beautiful boy in black, who is standing by the open window."

Smith smiled, both at the nature of my question, and the enthusiasm with which it was urged, and answered, "Trevannion,—Eustace Trevannion,—he is nephew to the Duke of * * *; and certainly a good-looking little fellow. But you must not talk about 'beautiful boys,' the fellows will laugh at you, if you do."

"Well," I thought, "this is a strange place where love and beauty are forbidden to be mentioned."

Smith walked away, and I moved towards the spot where young Trevannion was standing. "Eustace Trevannion," said I to myself, "what a beautiful name to be sure. How much better than John Smith."

Just at this moment the school-bell rang, and Smith came back to me, saying, "Do you know where you are to sit?—You do.—Well; let me see whether your desk is in good order. Has it a lock? Take care that you make good use of the key. You have not yet been posted to a class, so you may amuse yourself, as you like, this school-hour; only keep quiet—stay, I will lend you a book," and he brought me a volume of *Don Quixote*.

I took my seat at the desk allotted to me. My next neighbour was a plain boy, with exceedingly dirty hands. But he was good-natured, and inclined to be communicative. He began talking

to me in an under tone, and I soon forgot the injunctions of John Smith.

“And so,” said my talkative neighbour, “you are to be one of Smith’s protégés. Let me tell you, you’re a deuced lucky fellow; it will all be smooth work with you now.”

“And who is this Smith?” said I.

“Who is Smith? Who’s Napoleon Buona-
parte?”—and my new friend would have added more, but that at this moment one of the masters called upon him for a copy of verses.

I had heard that it was the custom of Dr. Good-enough, to instruct, in his own proper person, the senior and the junior classes of his establishment, and now that my companion had quitted me, I turned my eyes towards the doctor’s desk, thinking that very likely I might see my friend Smith standing beside it. And there he was—the first boy of the first class of the first school in the country.

Presently I was rejoined by my dirty-fingered young neighbour. “So Smith,” said I “is the first boy in the school?”

“Yes; and a jewel of a fellow—every body likes Smith—from the doctor down to Dick the shoe-boy—we would do any thing for Smith.”

“Is he very clever?” I inquired.

“I don’t know that he is,” replied my neighbour, “I never heard any body say so.”

“ Well,” thought I, “ this is very strange—he is neither a beauty nor a genius, yet every body in the school loves him. Happy John Smith !”

“ And Trevannion,” I said, “ Eustace Trevannion—is he very clever —he looks it.”

My companion smiled “ Oh ! *the young Duke!* —But stop, the doctor is looking.”

I heard a scuffling of feet. The senior class was dispersed, and the junior class, which consisted of a number of *very* little boys, were going up with their lessons.

I looked, and amongst these little boys was one much older than the rest, who took his place last but one in the class. I was horror-struck—it was Eustace Trevannion.

And all my castles in the air were demolished in a single moment. My companion beheld my astonishment, and uttered a few words in reply to the question I had put to him. They were quite enough—and the young, the beautiful, the graceful, the high-born—the *honourable* Eustace Trevannion was the most incorrigible dunce in the school.

I was very unhappy. I said to myself, “ I have got into a strange place, peopled with John Smiths.”

CHAPTER V.

THE PERILS OF DREAM-LAND.

" Earth has its flowers ; and 'tis sometimes wise,
To stoop that we may cull them—there are gems,
Lustrous and many, still more lowly-born ;
Twere a fool's speech to say they are not bright
Because the stars are brighter—Dream no more,
Then canst not have a Pleiad for thy bride."

MS.

I WAS so much mortified by the discovery of Trevannion's mental imbecility, that it was some time before I could summon courage to fix upon another to be my friend. In the mean time, every succeeding day afforded fresh proofs of Smith's excellence, and of the high opinion in which he was held by his school-fellows. But there was

one thing that astonished me very much. Nobody seemed to acknowledge that he was gifted with any shining qualities, and yet he seemed to do every thing much better than any body else. He was not allowed to be clever, yet he was the best scholar in the academy; he was "no cricketer," yet he headed every score; he had "no idea whatever of fighting," and yet he was the champion of the school. "This was sheer envy," —Not in the least. Nobody envied Smith, and for this reason, every body liked him. He was popular, because he took great care that no one should *feel* his superiority. He had a particularly unassuming way of setting about anything, and was in the constant habit of "running himself down," with no mock-modesty, but with a candour, which especially became him. "You might do this just as well as I do it, if you would but take as much trouble," was a speech frequently in his mouth. He used to say that he was "the head of the school," for no other reason than that he had worked hardest; and that if he was a successful cricketer, it was only because he was a steady one. All this was done without design; and yet if he had studied Rochefoucault all his life he could not by any possibility have alighted upon a more certain recipe for popularity.

I am somewhat inclined to think that Smith's

proneness to self-disparagement, though carried to an undue excess, did not lead him in any great measure, to form a false estimate of his abilities. Though gifted with more sound sense, than any young person I ever knew, he was not naturally a genius—but he was something better, he was a young man with rare powers of application, and judgment, which never led him astray. Let industry pull the oars, and judgment direct the helm, and I'll wager that genius never passes them in the race down the river of life.

Smith was kind to me, and in turn I was grateful; I esteemed him, and in process of time, I almost began to admire him; but I saw not in him the "golden chalice," which was to receive the "bright wine" of my love.* He counselled me; he restrained me; he protected me; and saved me very often from committing myself. Sometimes he would let me "run my course," thinking that my own experience might be of more use to me than his precepts. But I always listened to his advice, and if I sometimes neglected to follow it, it was not because I was wilful, but, invariably, because I was weak.

* Asia! who when my being overflowed
Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine.

SHELLEY'S *Prometheus*.

One day I said to Smith,—“ You have been very kind to me for some months—doing something for me every day; and I have often told you that I am grateful, and I dare say that you believe me; but I have never yet had an opportunity of proving the gratitude I profess. I wish that you would suffer me, Smith, to do something or other for you.—Is there no way in which I may be useful? Oh! do, do tell me, and don’t shake your head.”

Smith smiled at my earnestness, and replied—“ You are a strange little fellow, Doveton; and your character is worth studying. You are an enthusiast; take care that you do not become a visionary. If I thought that you would understand me, I would explain to you what I mean. Do you dream much?”

“ All night; and sometimes, I think, in the day.”

“ I never dream.—Now just tell me what books you have read.”

I could not help thinking that we were wandering a little from the immediate subject of our discourse; but I answered, as I did once before, “ Shakspeare.”

“ Ah! you told me that—what else?”

I thought a little.—“ The Bride of Abydos, Lalla Rookh, and the Loves of the Angels.”

"You could not have read anything worse. You seem to like poetry."

"I doat on it."

"Doat on nothing. Dotage is a melancholy sight."

"Do you think it wrong, Smith, to read poetry?"

"Not at all; I read it myself."

"Do you like Byron?" said I, emboldened by this confession.

"By no means; his philosophy is odious."

I did not see the force of this reply. I thought to myself, "I ask about poetry, and I receive an answer about philosophy. *What have they to do with one another?*"

"Indeed!" said I.

"Now, tell me, Doveton—how old are you?"

"Twelve and a half."

"Then let me advise you to read no more poetry for a year."

My head drooped, and I was silent. I neither liked to disobey Smith, nor to go without poetry for a twelvemonth.

"Do you learn mathematics?" asked Smith.

"No," said I.

"Then write home to your father, and ask his permission to begin next quarter."

I thought to myself, "How this fellow flies off from one subject to another." I could not see the drift of his interrogatories.

Smith walked away; but I presently ran after him, exclaiming, "But is there really nothing that I can do for you? You have not answered my question yet. Oh! do say 'Yes;' I am dying to make myself of use."

"Then," said Smith, "I will save your life. You shall do something for me, Doveton."

"Oh! I am so glad!" and my face brightened up as I spoke.—"What is it that I can do for you, Smith?"

"*Go and play at cricket*—'twill do you good;" and my monitor walked away, smiling.

Yet, in spite of all this—in spite of Smith's admonitions,—in spite of the restraining influence of his never-ending good sense, which fell upon my enthusiasm like water upon a blazing fire, my heart ceased not to be the home of infinite and unsatisfied longings. It is true, that, at the suggestion of my monitor, I abandoned my poetical studies; but I gained nothing by the abandonment. On the contrary, my poor soul, thus deprived of its accustomed aliment, felt more craving than it had ever felt before. Deprived of books, I had more time to dream. I no longer held communion with the ideal creations of the poet, but with imaginary beings of my own creating. I made a world, and I peopled it myself with a number of beautiful abstractions; and I quite forgot that Smith had ever said to me, "Take care that you don't become a visionary."

Sometimes—but this was not very often—I would look around me, and endeavour to absorb myself in the goings-on of the visible world. I do not think that I saw things aright; my mind was enveloped with a peculiar atmosphere—a misty one—and whatever it looked upon, wore an aspect undefined and shadowy. Seen through this delusive medium, palpable realities became dim abstractions. I beheld qualities, and not persons—feelings, and not actions—wide principles, and not narrow details. I had a sort of language of my own; and I thought of my school-fellows, not by their proper names, but by the distinguishing characteristics of their idiosyncracies. Thus one was Gentleness, another Anger, a third Genius, and so on.

These far-off contemplations, in which I sometimes indulged, were not wholly unproductive of delight; for in looking around me and tracing the various principles which appeared to actuate my different school-fellows, I discovered, to my infinite joy, that good was more abundant than evil amongst them, and that though they might sometimes go astray it was much more frequently a wrong judgment than a bad heart, which misled them. Indeed there seemed to be every where a vast deal of good feeling. Kindness, generosity, gentleness and forbearance glittered, wherever I turned my eyes, like stars upon a cloudless night;

I sought for good and I found it (as who may not?) and having found it I rejoiced. But it was not enough for me to behold it from afar off; I longed to enjoy it palpably—to commune with it face to face—to find it all in a friend. But when I thought of this I despaired; I was afraid to approach nearer, for many objects, which look beautiful at a distance, are but tawdry and uncouth things, when we draw nigh unto them; and I knew it. “No; no,” said I—“let me dream on—my yearnings must still be unsatisfied. I must rest content with the shadow, for the substance can never be mine,”

One day after a conversation with Smith, which had extended to an unusual length, I began seriously to ask myself whether the strange life I was leading was that of a philosopher or a fool. After one of these colloquies with Smith, some specimens of which I have laid before the reader, my reflections were wont always to assume a somewhat more mundane tone and ceased, perhaps for a full hour, from communing with the invisible world. Upon the present occasion I grovelled more than usual; I pondered over Smith’s words and compared the calm sobriety of his doctrines with the vagrant nature of my wild imaginings, until I began almost to think that he was the greater philosopher of the two. “There is no wisdom,” said I, “in yearning after impossible things. I will content

myself with that which is ;” and I began to look around me for the actual.

At this period I had been a year at Dr. Good-enough’s, and had not yet suited myself with a friend. I well remember this particular morning. It was spring-time ; the air was fresh ; the skies were bright ; and we were abroad in the meadows. The cricket-season had not yet commenced, and we were enjoying our daily walk in the country—some here and some there, wandering at will, and making the most of our brief season of liberty. When Smith left me, I was alone ; and without any definite intention, I turned my steps towards the river.

As I went I was overtaken by a school-fellow, a boy of about my own age, whose name was Hawker. In my catalogue, where qualities stood for persons, he was typified by the title of buoyancy, or some word synonymous with this ; for in those days I dealt more largely in ideas than I did in language, and my brain was ever teeming with fancies, which I could not have expressed in words. This boy was the very soul of levity ; there were none so light-hearted as he, none blessed with such exuberant spirits, none so heedless, none so short-sighted, none so happy. He lived but in the present moment ; the past, the future, were nothing to him. Hope and its twin-brother fear and memory disturbed him not ; he

enjoyed life ; he found blessings everywhere ; he hated no one, he vexed no one, and he "went upon his way rejoicing."

"Come, Doveton—come along with me," cried the boy, panting as he spoke, for he had bounded across the meadow with the fleetness of a young fawn. "I know where a moor-hen's nest is to be found. Come with me, and we will take it."

Smith's words were still ringing in my ears ; he had exhorted me to act more, and I thought that there could not be a better opportunity than this of testifying my faith in his doctrines.

"That I will—you are a good fellow, Hawker, come along," and off we started.

We ran as hard as we could, and had presently reached the river's edge. "This is the place," cried Hawker ; and taking up a large stone, he threw it amongst the rushes, and the old bird started up and flew across the river.

But it was not quite so easy, as we had anticipated that it would be, to take possession of the nest. Hawker had a stick in his hand, and with this he endeavoured to reach it, but in vain. At length, straining forward, with a last desperate effort, he over-reached himself, and fell headlong into the water.

The river was very deep in this place ; this I knew, and accordingly I was much frightened when I saw Hawker disappear beneath the surface

of the water. "He will be drowned," thought I, and without hesitation I plunged into the water to rescue him.

But in doing this, unfortunately for us both, there were two circumstances which I had entirely overlooked; firstly, that I could not swim a stroke, and, secondly, that young Hawker was one of the best swimmers in the school. My first attempt at *action* was therefore a lamentable failure.

The result of my folly it may be easy to divine. We were both of us very nearly drowned. When Hawker began to strike out, he found me clinging to his back. It was my desire to save him, but instead of this he saved me. Nothing but his admirable swimming and his extreme coolness could have rescued us. When we again stood upon the bank my friend laughed heartily.

"We may as well have the nest, however," said Hawker, "having suffered so much in our attempt to capture it;" and having said this, he plunged again into the river, and bore off the desired booty triumphantly.

When we reached home, we were both of us flogged for getting wet. This was the first time I had been scourged, and I certainly must confess that the chastisement was eminently beneficial; for it had the effect more than any thing else of bringing my soaring fancies down to the common level of human cogitations. There is something

palpable in a good flogging; I did not feel disposed to dream over it.

The history of my aquatic achievements was soon pretty well known throughout the school, and I was laughed at, but I consoled myself with thinking that I could perceive some latent feelings of admiration beneath all the ridicule that was heaped upon me. There was certainly nothing reprehensible in my conduct, but nevertheless, Smith upbraided me.

"Why," said I, "you told me to act."

"To act,—but I did not tell you to drown yourself. You are a greater fool, Doveton, than I suspected," and Smith walked away.

"Well," thought I, "it does not much matter if that fellow does give me up. I am sick of his eternal common sense. Besides, he leaves at the end of this half. I will make Hawker my friend. I don't think that *he* will reject me."

Just at this moment my new friend approached.

"Doveton," said he, "I've been thinking that though we were nearly drowned this morning, it was deuced good-natured in you to jump after me when I tumbled in. I don't see that it makes much difference that you could not swim and I could, because the intention was precisely the same; and so I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

"Rather let me thank you, my dear Hawker,

for to you I am indebted for my life." And my heart yearned towards the boy ; the sluice-gates of my affections were opened ; I poured forth a flood of words, and I felt full of delight.

" You are very kind," said Hawker, " to praise me, and to think that I have done you a service, but depend upon it, that if you had been able to swim like a fish, as I do, and if I had been able to swim just like a stone, as you do, I should never have thought of jumping into the water to pull you out, my dear Doveton."

" But that was my ignorance," said I.

" Your generosity rather," replied my friend, and having said this he ran off, singing all the way as he went.

" I wonder whether he was in earnest," thought I, " or whether he was laughing at me all the time."

CHAPTER VI.

DESPONDENCY.

——— "He came
To Venice, a dejected man ; and fame
Said he was wealthy or he had been so ;
Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe."
SHELLEY.

LET us now return to the family at Meadowbank. I am just fourteen years of age, and at home for the Midsummer holidays. My sisters are still the Miss Dovetons ; and my brother Arthur one of the finest little victims to the misdirections of maternal attachment that has ever lived to be a torment to himself and a curse to every one around him.

And my father—my poor father—still walks he in the shadow of despondency. . Time brings

no healing upon its wings, for there is a “rooted sorrow” in my father’s heart ; and he can neither look back without remorse nor look forward without fear, nor seek for solace in the heart of his family without the constant recurrence of one bitter reflection—“ *I have been an enemy to ye all.*”

Oh ! indeed there is no more bitter dispensation than to seek for a blessing in its own proper home and to find a curse crouching there in its stead.

My father was no philosopher—unless it be philosophy to lie down at the approach of danger, like a poor Hindoo fanatic awaiting the advent of the Juggernaut. It is wise indeed to bear, but not to bear over-much,—to be patient under affliction, but not to be greedy after wretchedness,—to bend, but not to be broken,—to receive meekly the chastisements of Providence, but not—oh ! believe me, not wise—to take the scourge into our own hands and to lengthen out the measure of our sufferings.

My father—as I have before said—my father was unhappy ; he sought for oblivion, but it came not at his bidding ; he tried to foster the growth of some new-born passion in his breast, or rather I should say to generate an all-engrossing attachment to some particular pursuit. He knew that idleness was the nurse of sorrow, and he resolved not to be idle ; but, unfortunately, nature had endowed him with no strong predilections,

and he soon found that an exotic taste, like plucked flowers planted in a jar of earth, will die long before it can become a rooted feeling in the breast. My father since the days of his boyhood, had dwelt in "the great city;" vast piles of plaster-woven stone had been daily before his eyes, and now that he attempted to attune his soul to the enjoyment of external nature, he found that the attempt was a failure; he went abroad, and he looked around him upon the thousand beauties of inanimate creation; but he could not lose sight of humanity, nor escape out of himself, by elevating his soul into the clear sunshine of philosophic abstraction, high above the misty influences of this sorrow-reeking world. His spirit was clogged to earth; it was capable of no lofty flight; the green fields and the spreading trees, the all-surrounding heaven, the bloomy air-tints on the distant hills—the sinuous river rushing towards the sea—and more than all, the beautiful alternations of light and shadow upon the dædal landscape awakened not his slumbering soul, nor dragged his fettered imagination from its dark prison-house of clay. He tried to soar—to be abstracted—to be drunk, as it were, with the surrounding loveliness, but he could not; it was beyond his power; his spirit crept along the earth.

Then he thought to confine the sphere of his efforts, and he turned aside from the contemplation

of universal nature to commune with an individual link of the great chain of creation. He sought for occupation in the *garden* ; but there he found not the treasure he was searching after. His mind worked not with his limbs. He took the spade into his hand, and he brought together a multitude of plants, and he classified them, and he watched their growth ; and he spake learnedly of *stamina* and *corollæ* and *monocotyledonous* leaves ; but his heart was not in his garden ; botany had no charms for him ; he saw the flower, but he beheld not its beauties ; he marked the specific character of each plant, he investigated all its various properties ; but his soul dwelt not admiringly upon the wonders of its organic structure and the strange history of its several developments from the seed to the perfect flower. He had dwelt too long in cities to find joy in a study, which has nature for the object of its investigations ; old memories haunted him still ; to follow up that, which he had begun, he soon found to be fruitless toil ; so he threw aside Linnæus in disgust, and suffered his garden to be neglected.

But it happened soon after this, that walking along the high-street of Merry-vale, my father espied, in the window of a certain broker, a number of old, venerable-looking books, which particularly arrested his attention. My father in the better days of his prosperity had not managed to escape

altogether that “cock-brained and heavy-pursed” *bibliomania*, which prevailed to such an alarming extent at the commencement of the present century; and now that he beheld these old tomes, clad in leather, which two hundred years ago had graced the sides of the ministering animal, he felt a sort of lurking desire to return unto his old pursuit and to begin *collecting* once again. But this desire was but of momentary continuance. He thrust his hands into his pockets to extinguish the fire that was burning there, and muttering to himself “Five, five,” meaning thereby, perhaps the number of his children; perhaps the number of hundreds which made up the sum of his income; he walked on with a brisk step, sighing audibly as he went along, and still keeping his hands in his pockets, as though he were striving to restrain the vagrant impulses of some rebellious cash, which loudly proclaimed its ambition to become the slave of another master, or rather, perhaps, I ought to say, the master of another slave.

But he had not proceeded half-way down the street before he halted and turned back. I know not by what process my father’s principles underwent such a complete transmutation, but so it was, that purse-in-hand he entered the shop of the above-mentioned broker, and requested, not without some embarrassment, “a sight of the old books in

the window." The truth is, that "faith is weak," and that my father was all weakness.

But in the present instance quite unconsciously he perpetrated an act of surpassing wisdom. He looked, with the eye of a *savant*, one by one at these time-hallowed volumes; he saw their value at once, and as he inspected them, he turned his back upon the broker, for my father, simple as a child in any other position of life, knew well enough how to comport himself discreetly in the presence of a book-dealer; and he deemed it prudent to turn away his face, for the countenance is often eloquent when the tongue utters nought, lest the quick eye of the broker should read there any tokens of delight, and a price be set upon the articles in proportion to the supposed eagerness of the buyer.

"And where did you get this rubbish?" said my father, as he threw down with a contemptuous air the last, but the most valuable of the pile, and taking out his handkerchief to wipe the dust off his hands, turned round to confront the book-seller.

"I got them," replied the broker—but it matters not where he got them. Uncle Benjamin, though knowing enough when household furniture, or wearing apparel, or plate, or jewellery came upon the tapis, was but little scientific in

bookcraft, and my father saw this at a glance. The man was glad to get rid of the books, for they had "lain a long time on hand," and having nothing of the *bibliognoste* about him, he had never even looked at their titles; and, if he had, he would have been none the wiser, for he had never studied Dibdin, or Lowndes. My father on the other hand was anxious to possess them, so that a bargain was soon struck, very much to the satisfaction of both parties; each thinking that he had got the best of it, and exulting in the *easiness* of the other.

I am sorry that I cannot present the inquisitive reader with a complete list of the volumes thus purchased; but amongst the number were Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum*, with its curious Hermetic devices, and Higgins' *Mirroure for Magistrates*, and Allot's *England's Parnassus*, and *Certaine learned and elegant Workes of the most noble Fulke, Lord Brooke*—the latter of which was "given in for nothing," because no less than twenty-two pages were absent from the commencement of the book; but as these pages had never been printed, (*vide* Lowndes,) the copy in question was as perfect as any other in existence, and my father, who knew this, chuckled inwardly at the ignorance of the dealer and his own superior sagacity.

But the book of all others, which my father

valued most, though it was not the most valuable, was *the Workes* of MR. JOHN MARSTON, *being Tragedies and Comedies collected into one volume, and printed for WILLIAM SHEARES, at the Har-rouce in Brittaines Burse, 1633. **

I have given this volume a paragraph to itself, and transcribed its title-page at full length, because it was the salvation of my father, who took it home with him on the day of his great purchase, and pored over it even until midnight. He had always delighted in old plays; he had read all Gifford's editions and Dodsley's notable collection, and several of Webster's and Middleton's dramas in their original quarto livery: but hitherto Marston had been a stranger to him, somehow or other this fine old play-right, up to this point, had eluded his inquiries, and now that he stumbled upon him as it were in a strange country, my father exulted in the discovery, as he had not exulted for years. The truth is, that he now beheld clearly the "arva beata," which he so long had been seeking. "Yes," said he—"yes, I will do it—I will prepare a new edition of these plays. It is wanted, it has long been wanted. Ford and Massinger have found an editor. Shirley is now

* This is the Work which old Anthony à Wood, who has blundered through certain comely folios of more amusing than veracious Oxford gossip, declares to have been superintended in its passage through the press by *William Shakspeare, the Comedian!!!*

passing through the press, and shall Marston be inedited?"

The next day he went to the binder, and had the Marston dissected in his presence. The volume was to be interleaved, and in a week the one shabby duodecimo reappeared as two stately octavos.

My father entered, with his whole soul, upon his new duties of editorship. His method of commencing operations was certainly a very ingenious one. He took down from his bookshelves the twenty-one volumes of his *variorum* edition of Shakspeare, and set them out on the table before him, taking care that the last volume, as being the one which contained the index, should be more immediately within his reach. Then he opened his interleaved Marston, and read on until he came to a word which he thought worthy of comment, and then the Shakspearian index was consulted, and the *variorum* notes carried off bodily from one dramatist to illustrate the text of the other. I do not mean that my father was so hard-hearted as to sacrifice his Shakspeare by cutting it up; he had too much respect for his books; he used not the scissors but the pen—transcribing the notes verbatim upon the interleavings of his Marston, and adding thereto whatever he might be able to collect from any other source.

Having paid this homage to the Shakspearian editors, he replaced the twenty-one volumes upon the shelves to which they belonged; then he took down Gifford's Ben Jonson—then his Massinger—then Dr. Nott's edition of Decker's Gulls' Horn-book—a very useful book—and he dealt with them as he had dealt with the Shakspeare, until he had collected a vast body of notes, all more or less applicable to the passages to be illustrated; and he called this editing an old author, and he thought it a delightful occupation, which it was; for when busied with his books in the quiet hermitage of his study, he quite forgot all his misfortunes, and his health visibly improved, and he never retired to bed without blessing old John Marston and his printer Mr. Wm. Sheares.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CRUSHED WORMS.

“ Along the winding pathways of the world
Some glide, some crawl, some hurry madly on,
Some skim like swallows, and some writhe like worms—
Mark ye the writhers now.”

MS.

I BEGAN my last chapter by saying that I was at home for the Midsummer holidays, and just fourteen years of age. My father was then employed upon the “*What You Will*,” which he held to be Marston’s *chef d’œuvre*. Sometimes I would enter the study and offer my services to him in the capacity of an amanuensis; for I wrote an excellent hand — much better, indeed, than my father’s; but my offers were generally slighted, as I was not considered worthy to fill such an impor-

tant situation as secretary to the editor of John Marston.

I rather suspect that my father thought me a fool ; my mother, indeed, often called me one—and perhaps not wholly without reason ; for I would sometimes sit for hours together without uttering a word, and they mistook that for heaviness, which was in reality fulness of thought. I was not sullen, but when I ventured to express an opinion, it sometimes happened that I was flouted—sometimes that I was laughed at—always that I was contradicted ; and this I did not much like, though it is probable that I owed my discomfiture more frequently to the singularity of my observations than to the unkindness of those who commented on them. I was very unlike all other boys ; but certainly not a dullard ; though sometimes I behaved in such a manner as to warrant a conjecture of my mental imbecility, returning inapposite answers to the simplest of questions, and making strange blunders upon the most ordinary occasions. The fact is, that I was often “in nubibus,” and I cannot well blame those around me for not comprehending very closely the nature of my cloudward excursions.

One day I was sufficiently collected to discern an unusual commotion in the house. Everybody appeared to be busy ; my mother and my sisters were running here and there, giving orders in

every direction, whilst our servants, two stout Devon lasses, hurried about with heavy feet, pouting lips, and moist faces.

I did not in the least know what all this bustle portended. I had a vague presentiment of some impending evil, and I rather thought that the bailiffs were in the house. It was evident that a very important crisis was about speedily to arrive; and being fully impressed with this conviction, I resolved to interrogate the first person I might meet, concerning the cause of this confusion.

The first person I met was my brother Arthur. "Well, Arthur," said I, "what's the matter?"

"What's the matter—nothing's the matter, except that it's full-moon to-night."

My brother used often to ask me in what quarter was the moon; meaning, as I suspect, that I was a lunatic; but I loved the boy; and I forgave him, for he meant not to be unkind.

"I mean," said I "what is the reason of all this bustle in the house—every body appears in a commotion, and something is about to take place."

"Oh! if you mean that," said Arthur, "why, Walter is coming here to-day."

"Walter!" I exclaimed, "and who's Walter?" This was one of those wool-gathering speeches which procured me the appellation of a fool.

"Who's Walter? that's a good one," cried

Arthur;—"who is Gerard? Come, brother, I'll bet you six-pence that you can't tell me your own name before I count fifty:—One, two, three"—and he went on counting, until I interrupted him saying with a voice full of kindness, bending my eyes on him as I spoke,

"But I have not forgotten who is Arthur—no, brother, not that—I may forget Walter, for I have not seen him since my childhood—I may forget myself and my own interests and do many foolish things—but not you, not you, Arthur; believe me I shall never forget *you*;" and I put my arm around my brother's neck and passed my fingers through his long hair.

Arthur raised his eyes and looked into my face. He read whole volumes of kindness there; and he replied, "Well, Gerard—you have always been very good to me; and if I do say things to you sometimes that I have no right to say, I can assure you that I mean nothing; I do not indeed, Gerard—it is all my fun and you must forgive me," and he took my hand into his own, and looked beseechingly in my face.

My eyes swam with tears: "Come Arthur," said I, "should you like a game of cricket? If you come into the field I will bowl to you;" and taking up the bats and wickets, I led Arthur out of the house.

When we had reached the field, Arthur seated

himself upon the ground, and said to me, as I was knocking in the stumps, "No, Gerard, I don't think that you like playing at cricket over much. You are very kind to do this to amuse me; but never mind the cricketing to-day, for I would much rather talk to my brother than play when he does not like it."

I laid myself down on the warm grass beside my brother; and he said to me, "I'll tell you what, Gerard; I often hear very unkind things spoken of you behind your back. Mamma says that you are an idiot, and all that sort of thing; and is very glad when your holidays are over, and I do believe that she wishes you were dead, for one day she said to me, 'Oh! Arthur if you had no brother I should have all the more for you;' but I'll be hanged, if she ever says so again, if I don't give it to her, Gerard.—Why, brother, how odd your face looks, and, Lord! there's blood upon your lips."

Poor Arthur! how little did he know that "the tender mercies of the *ignorant* are cruel," and that these few words of intended kindness had inflicted upon me more anguish than all his taunts and sarcasms had ever done since the first hour that he began to imitate the impertinence of his elders.

"Never mind, Arthur—I am well now,"—and endeavouring to change the subject, I asked him some question about Walter.

"I hope," said Arthur—"that he will bring his

sword, and his pistols, and his cocked hat—by Jove, what fun I will have—I know how to make bullets, and if I don't put one or two into the fat sides of old Randall's pigs, the next time they come into our garden, my name's not Arthur, that's all—I'll be hanged if there's not one there now," and up started Arthur, seizing a big stone, and in less than a minute he was to be seen in hot pursuit of the devoted porker.

I walked towards the house, and going straight to my father's study, I tapped gently at the door.

"Come in—who is there?" cried my father in somewhat of a rough voice.

I entered and saw at once that he was not in a very enviable humour. He was puzzling, as I thought, over some passage of Marston, which baffled his critical sagacity. "It is I, Sir—Gerard—can I help you?"

"Help me? and do you look upon yourself as an abler commentator than your father?—do you expect to succeed where I have failed, Sir, and think that your superior wisdom can throw light upon a subject which all my efforts have been unable to illustrate?"

"You mistake me, my dear Sir; I presumed not to offer any intellectual, but merely some manual, assistance. Is there anything that I can transcribe?"

"Oh! that is it," replied my father, quite sub-

duced by the submissiveness of my manner and the meek respect, with which I addressed him—"oh that is all; well, sit down, Gerard. There is a passage here which I cannot make out; for I am not in a happy vein to-day:—

———— ‘But O to marke yon thing
Sweat to unite acquaintance to his friend,
Labour his praises and indeere his worth
With titles all as formally set forth
As the cap of a Dedicatory Epistle.’

The *Cap*—now what is the Cap? *The Cap of a Dedicatory Epistle?*”

“I think, Sir,” said I diffidently, “that it means the *illuminated capital* with which it was customary in Marston’s days to commence every dedicatory epistle. Look, Sir, at the M here—‘Many opprobies and aspersions, &c.’ how ‘formally’ is it ‘set forth.’”

“S’foot,” said my father, “there is something in that; I believe, you’re right after all.” Then soliloquizing in an under-tone he continued, “The boy’s not such a fool as I took him to be. By’r Lady, there’s some sense in his sconce.”

My father laid his hand upon my head, and was about to speak words of encouragement to me, at least his countenance indicated as much, when the study door was seen to open, and my mother entered the room.

“Mr. Doveton.”

“Well; my dear.”

“Perhaps you know,” continued my mother, “that we expect our son Walter here to-day.”

“His letters have forewarned us of his advent,” replied my father in his quaint phraseology; for he had adopted an antique mode of speech in honour of his dear John Marston.

“They have,” resumed my mother—“our last letter from the captain——”

“You have given him Brevet rank,” interrupted my father with a smile.

My mother paid no attention to this sally, but continued, “And perhaps you know that in honour of our son’s arrival I have invited a few friends to dine with us, and several of our neighbours to come in the evening, that the Captain——”

“Methinks, my dear love,” interrupted my father a second time in a low drawling voice,—“methinks that thy vision must be more acute than mine, for I have not yet been fortunate enough, to see our son’s promotion in the gazette.”

I know not what it could have been that made my father so facetious upon this occasion. My mother, it is certain, was quite unused to such sallies upon the part of her lord and master. Sarcasm was a weapon which she looked upon as one peculiarly her own; and as no doctor likes to drink his own medicines, she did not very much relish this application of her own regimen to herself.

But at all events she knew how to reply: —“ I wonder, Mr. Doveton, that you have the confidence to utter that last word.”

That last word was “ Gazette.” My poor father had been playing with a tigress, and now his head was between the jaws of the animal. He turned quite pale; the corners of his mouth drooped, and he clutched his knees with both his hands convulsively.

I wept.

“ You might have spared that remark,” said my father.

“ You provoked me,” replied Mrs. Doveton.

“ Nay, my dear, I purposed not to vex thee. I spake but in the jocular vein.”

“ And I paid you back in your own coin,” returned my mother — “ merely *in the jocular vein*.”

“ Nay, my dear, but it is sorry jesting to apply the hot iron where the flesh is most tender.”

“ Well, then, if you are so sensitive you should take care not to expose yourself.”

“ I will, Jane. I was wrong to provoke thee.— Henceforth I will be more watchful. But, tell me, thou wert about to say something regarding the advent of some guests.”

“ Did I not tell you some days ago that the two Mr. Eustons dine here—and the Bellamys, and the Croakers, and young Ord?”

"No, my dear, I knew nothing about it. But, methinks—" here my father stopped short, fearing a second application of the "hot iron," which had scorched him so unmercifully before.

"And what do you think?" asked my mother.

My father hesitated.

"Well!" said Mrs. Doveton.

My father was in a dilemma, but at length he took courage, and said in a most submissive voice, "I was merely thinking, my dear, that as several years have elapsed since we last gladdened our eyes with a sight of our first-born, it would have been pleasanter to have enjoyed the society of the dear boy, on the first night of his visit to us, in private. Think you not that he will have much to say unto us; and we much to impart unto him? Such intercommunings between long separated friends are amongst the greatest sweetnesses of life."

"Probably," returned my mother, "but they will *keep*, and be none the worse for the postponement of a day."

"And the same might be said of the dinner-party, my dear; but I dare say that you have acted for the best."

"Of course I have; and 'acting for the best' I have come here to tell you, Mr. Doveton, that we shall want the use of your study to night."

“My dear?”

“Yes—I have so arranged it that the refreshments shall be laid out here. This little room will be the very thing for such a purpose—don’t you think that it will, Mr. Doveton?”

“No, my dear—I think no such thing. Besides, what do you want with refreshments? Suppers are quite out of date.—My study to be made a refreshment room!—Mrs. Doveton, what am I to do, with my books, my papers, my Marstons?”

“Mr. Doveton, what am I to do with our friends who are coming in the evening—the Browns—the Hawkineses, and the Bradburys—we cannot send them empty away.”

“You should have thought of all this before,” said my father, in the highest degree indignant—to think of John Marston being turned out of doors to make room for ham-sandwiches, custards, and calves-foot-jellies!—the idea of the thing was insupportable, it was enough to excite the choler of an angel.

“But we must have it, Mr. Doveton.”

“Mrs. Doveton, you must *not*.”

“But I will, though.”

“I’m d—d, if you shall”—and my father thumped the table, and looked as I had never seen him look in the whole course of my life. As for myself, I began to be frightened, for this was the very first oath that I had ever known to issue

from his lips, and I felt certain his passions must have arrived at a fearful state of excitation before he could so far forget himself as to swear in the presence of a lady. But human patience, like all other things human, has its limits, and the endurance of my father, thus assailed, could no longer hold out against the attacks of the enemy. "You shan't have my room, Mrs. Doveton; you shan't; I'm d—d if you shall!" cried my father, smiting the table and overturning an inkstand in his wrath. My mother, unaccustomed to such vehemence, looked at her husband quite rigid with astonishment; whilst I, trembling all over, and almost blinded by my tears, rushed out of the room, fully determined that nothing short of the most urgent necessity should ever drive *me* into the commission of a folly so preposterous as matrimony.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE UNBRIDLED CAREER OF LICENTIOUSNESS
ARRESTED BY A GENEROUS IMPULSE.

FLAV. Look, look ; danger is there—
The horse is strong, the rider very weak,
The gad-fly stings the horse, and close beside them
Yawns the dread precipice.—

MAR. I see them not.

FLAV. But see you not a man, who cannot curb
His head-strong passions, which a little thing—
A *very* little thing,—a gad-fly, mark you—
Goads on to fury.

MAR. He will surely fall.—

FLAV. No, no—one noble impulse yet may save him.

MS. TRAGEDY.

I MADE for the hall-door, and just at the threshold of the house I met Arthur, dripping with wet and plentifully bespattered with mud. He was quite out of breath. “What a chase—I have had—to be sure !” said he, puffing and panting as he spoke —“those confounded pigs, Gerard—what do you think ?—I chased them through the orchard—across the meadow—through Bradley’s field—

down the lane—then into the swamp, where the brook is—and somehow or other a dog came out of the flags—and the foremost pig wheeled round suddenly—and cut in just between my legs—capsizing me into the brook—and a deuced muddy brook it is—just look at me—in your whole life, did you ever see such a piebald figure?”—and Arthur, proud of his exploits, turned round that I might view him to advantage, laughing all the time, and vowing to “have it out of the pig.”

I could not help smiling, for I thought of the ingenious history of “Jack and Gill,” which I had read in my childhood, and I said to Arthur, “Shall I pump upon you?” and Arthur said, “You be hanged!”

My brother went into the house, calling out, “Mamma—mamma!” which I was very glad to hear, because I knew that Arthur’s voice, thus appealing to the attention of his mother, would infallibly bring the wordy warfare in the study to a full stop. Satisfied of this, I took my hat, and sallied into the open air.

I passed the garden and struck into the fields, ascending a steep hill by a narrow pathway, which intersected a thriving cornfield, not yet quite ready for the sickle. I thought of Walter as I went; and I pictured him to “my mind’s eye” as a fine, handsome young soldier, frank, generous, and of a manly bearing; and I longed to shake him by the

hand, and to talk with him of "the neighing steed and the shrill trump" —

" The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war."

And I kept repeating the name "Walter—Walter—brother Walter"—as I went along; and I longed for the hour to arrive which I had fixed upon for his appearance at Meadow-bank.

I had wandered about half a mile from home, unheeding whither I went, when suddenly I heard behind me the tramp of a horse's feet approaching me at full gallop. I must endeavour to describe my position. I was upon an eminence, walking along a pathway, which bordered a level field of grass, and ran parallel with the margin of an almost perpendicular cliff. Nothing but a little straggling underwood skirted this dangerous descent, which was abrupt enough to form a sort of high scarp-wall to a road which led towards the river. It went by the name of "Lambert's-fall," because it was reported that one John Lambert had met with his death by o'er-toppling the precipice one night, when, unsteady with liquor, he was returning home from Merry-vale fair.

I heard the tramp of horse's hoofs approaching me, and looking up, I beheld a bright bay horse dashing across the field, at the full stretch of its

speed, in the direction of the spot I was standing upon. It was evident that he who sate upon the animal had the power neither to arrest nor to guide it ; and it was equally evident that the situation of both the horse and the rider was one of the most deadly peril. That rider was quite a boy ; and, though he retained his seat, like one accustomed to the saddle, and resorted, with extreme presence of mind, to every expedient that jockeyship has devised in aid of such an extremity as this, he was to the full as much at the mercy of the impetuous animal as would have been the tiniest babe. He pulled, he sawed, he jerked ; but his efforts were quite infantine. He put forth his whole strength, gathering himself up for each succeeding attempt, and making every muscle of his frame work together ; but it was very idle. He might just as well have attempted to stay the tide of a river with a straw. Onward came the infuriated quadruped, increasing his speed as he came—his head down, his ears back, and one cheek of the bit in his mouth. My heart stood still, as I looked at the boy-rider ; for I thought that his days were numbered. . .

Before him was the perpendicular cliff ; I cried out, but my voice was feeble. On came the horse and the rider ;—I saw the boy, conscious that his struggles were unavailing, raise his eyes and look before him. Then, but not until then, did his

countenance become deadly pale. He was bare-headed and I thought that his face was familiar to me ; but it was distorted with fear ; and I saw not with much distinctness, for there was a whirlpool within my brain, and I was in an agony ; my pulses galloped, a cold tremor seized upon my limbs, and for a moment all was quite dark.

But I was not paralyzed—a sort of blind impulse, like that, which on a former occasion caused me to plunge into the waters of the * * *, drove me forward, and scarcely knowing what I did, I threw myself in the way of the impetuous animal, and seizing hold of the bridle, I swung myself round, and in a moment I was lying on my back.

I was unhurt—the sudden jerk, which I had given to the rein had extricated it from the hands of the rider, so that when I fell, still holding the bridle, the impetus of the onward-going horse swung me on one side quite clear of his hoofs : and my fall, for I held the reins firmly, arrested the progress of the animal. As for the rider, he was unhorsed ; thrown violently out of his saddle by reason of this sudden stoppage, he alighted upon his uncovered head and lay beside me bleeding on the ground.

I was the first to regain my legs. The horse thus unburthened of its rider stood still, looking quite contrite, and suffered me to lead him away to a gate, where I tied him securely. Having

done this I returned to the spot, where the poor boy, whose equestrian feats had terminated in such an unlucky catastrophe, was lying with his face towards the ground. I raised him, and seating myself on the grass, I placed his head upon my knees, and soon recognized the features of a boy, whom I had often before seen in the neighbourhood, and whom I knew to be the son of a widow woman, bearing the name of Moore. The horse too was no stranger to me—it was the property of Reginald Euston, Sir Willoughby's eldest son—and was, as I had often heard him say, “the finest bit of blood in the county.”

Young Moore—his baptismal name was Lawrence, though he more frequently was called Larry—had been stunned by his heavy fall, and his right temple laid open by a sharp flint-stone—perhaps the only one on the whole surface of the field—with which his devoted cranium had the ill-luck to come in contact; but fortunately there was no fracture, and though the wound emitted much blood it did not bear a dangerous aspect, so that I soon ceased to tremble for the safety of the poor boy.

I tried to staunch the blood with a handkerchief; and presently the young unfortunate opened his eyes, and recovering gradually his consciousness, he first looked at me, then at the declivity before us, and then crying faintly, “But where is

Trumpeter—not down—not down there I hope.”—He would have started upon his legs, but that I restrained him, saying, “Quite safe,” and I then exhorted him to be quiet.

“Thank God!—thank God!” cried the boy—but we must make haste, we must indeed or Mr. Euston—oh! never mind my head, Sir.—I shan’t bleed to death this time. But who—?” and he looked into my face—“what! young Mr. Doveton as I live!—and did you save Trumpeter, Mr. Gerard?—then God Almighty bless you, Sir, for I shall never know how to thank you enough.”

I thought to myself, “This is the true voice of gratitude. It was not thus that young Hawker thanked me for jumping into the river * * * !”

I pulled some of the beaver off my hat, and having applied it, as a styptic, to the wounded part I tied a handkerchief round the temples of the boy, and then assisted him to rise, for he was weak from the loss of blood, begging him to lean heavily upon me, and not to exert himself unnecessarily.

“Thank you—thank you, Mr. Gerard,” said the boy—“but I think that if I were to mount again, I might save you the trouble of supporting me; though for the matter of that, Sir, I could walk well enough by myself—but I don’t think Trumpeter will play me another such a scurvy trick to-day.”

I intreated the boy not to mount again, untying

the horse as I spoke ;—“ Very well,” said he, “ I will do what you tell me, Mr. Gerard ; for I owe my life, and Trumpeter’s life which is a matter of much more consequence, to your presence of mind, Sir, and I shall never forget this if I live to be as old as Methuselem.”

I felt happier at this moment than I had ever felt before, and I began to think whether it would be possible to make this boy my friend. He was not my equal in worldly advantages ; but what was that ?—My vagrant imagination over-leapt such a conventional barrier.—What was it to me that young Moore dwelt in a cottage whilst I dwelt in a house ; or that his mother was a poor soldier’s widow whilst mine was the daughter of a general officer ? The boy was about my own age, handsome enough for a king’s son, and I felt that I had a claim upon his affections, for happily I had saved his life—but I thought of the family at Meadow-bank, of my unloving mother, and of my vain-glorious sisters, and feeling that situated as I was it would be utterly impossible to associate familiarly with a cottager’s boy, I wished that I had been born a peasant, or that social order had never entered into the world to control with its unmeaning distinctions the vagrancies of catholic love.

Lawrence Moore was a noble-looking boy ; with his dark curling hair and his sunburnt

cheeks, and his bright hazel eyes with their dark fringes, he looked like a young shepherd-king, a boy Romulus ignorant of his royalty. I had often seen him before, and often had stood still to gaze at him. Mine was a painter's eye, and the entire appearance of young Moore was essentially picturesque; he was tall for his years, and though not too stout to be ungraceful, he was muscular and broad-shouldered—of a build equally adapted to purposes of strength and activity. His countenance, such as I have described it to have been, was open and radiant, with an expression of daring and good-nature, which were indeed,—for the face rarely lies,—the most distinguishing characteristics of the boy. As for his dress—and to find a trace of the picturesque in the costumes of our highly civilized country, we must descend to the lower walks of life, for beauty and civilization do not travel along the same road—in the summer season, a blue striped shirt, with its broad collars turned over his shoulders, and a pair of loose trousers, generally white, were the principal articles of his apparel. He hated anything that bordered on restraint; he threw aside whatever impeded the free action of his limbs, or checked the natural current of his blood. Even a hat he regarded as a superfluity, and when he went abroad in the fields, he most frequently went bare-headed, well content to brave the sun and the rain

and all inclemencies of weather, about which he cared as little as the stormy petrel on the bosom of the ocean, or the curlew by the river's side.

"I have made but a bad day's work of it," said Lawrence, as we went along, I leading Trumpeter with one arm, whilst my companion leant upon the other,—“a very bad day's work, Mr. Gerard, but it is lucky that my head is broken, and not Trumpeter's knees, so that you see it might have been worse, especially if we both of us had gone right down ‘Lambert's Fall,’ as indeed we were in a fair way of doing, when you——.”

“Never mind me,” said I, breaking in upon young Moore's discursiveness—“but tell me how you came to be mounted on Mr. Euston's crack-horse Trumpeter, and how Trumpeter came to run away with you, like an animal possessed of a devil?”

“And I firmly believe that he was,” replied Lawrence, “unless as may be the case, a cursed gad-fly was digging into him behind. But it was thus; I was up by the warren, for I had been calling on Luke Hanway, the keeper, when Mr. Euston comes riding up, and says to me, ‘Well, Larry, have you thought over what I told you in the Park, the day before yesterday?’ And I said to him, ‘Yes, Mr. Euston, I have thought a great deal about it.’”

“About what?” I asked.

“The business,” replied Larry, “that Mr. Euston had been talking to me about by the Park-gates, the day before yesterday.”

“And what was that?” said I.

Larry looked confused and blushed slightly as he answered: “The truth is—for I’m sure, Mr. Gerard, that I ought to keep nothing from you—Mr. Euston is a great friend of mine, I mean that he is often very kind to me—and he often takes me out with him in the winter season a rabbiting, and in the summer, fishing or boating—and somehow or other, as he says, he has taken a great fancy to me, and he wishes to take me into service”—here the cheek of the boy was crimsoned, “and he says that I am just the fellow he would like for ‘a tiger,’ as he calls it, and all that sort of thing; but it was ‘no go,’ Mr. Gerard, I couldn’t do it, I couldn’t indeed.”

“You were quite right,” said I, but I believe that I should have found it difficult, had I been called upon, to justify my words.

“The fact is,” continued young Moore, “that I should like well enough to ride Mr. Euston’s horses, and to go out with him in the gig—meaning the boat, Mr. Gerard, not the gig that goes upon wheels—and to step over the preserves by the side of him or along the river, fishing-rod in hand—and then to trundle up to London on the top of the Quicksilver Mail. I like to do all these

things, but *not as a servant*, Mr. Gerard, though I like the young squire well enough, and one of these days, I know, he will be Sir Reginald Euston, and the Hall and the Park will be his ; but that's no reason that I can see why I should be his servant, though most boys would jump at the offer, hang them for slaves, say I."

I was about to say something about liberty and Great Britain, and the human soul, when Larry continued—"The fact is, Mr. Gerard, that, though you may think me a foolish boy and above my station, and all that sort of thing, like most other people, I have my fancies, and my fancy is to be free ; you will say, perhaps, that I have no right to be proud, being only a poor soldier's boy, but my father was nobody's servant, and wore nobody's livery but the king's, or rather, I should say, the country's ; and I *am* proud, however wrong it may be, too proud by far to be stable-boy and valet to Mr. Reginald Euston. And then I hate all restraint ; I like to be my own master, to *go* where I will, not *to be sent* where others will ; to wake when I like, to sleep when I like, to dress as I like ; to be abroad in the fields when it pleases me, or at home by my chimney-corner. In short, you see I was not born to be a servant, so I told Mr. Euston that I was very sorry to refuse him, but that I could not bring myself to be any man's, not even his, servant."

“And did you tell your mother of all this?”

“Oh! no, sir, not one word; it would have wounded her to the quick to think that the offer had been made to me.”

“Is she then proud like yourself?”

“Oh, no, she is not proud, Mr. Gerard; she has nothing wicked about her. She is very good; and many's the time that I have heard her say, it becomes us to be humble,—but, I know, if there is one thing in the world, which she would rather have me not be,—its the livery servant of a rich man,—and so I said nothing about it.”

“And what did Mr. Euston say, when you declined acceding to his proposals?”

“Oh! he laughed and he said, ‘By Jupiter, you are a strange boy, Larry,—but I don't like you a bit the less for speaking out freely on the subject;’—and then he told me that he had a bran new fishing-rod, that he intended to give me as a present in return for the brace of trout which I sent up to the hall on Wednesday,—then he asked me to hold Trumpeter, and said, ‘You may mount, if you like,’ complimenting me at the same time on my horsemanship, but telling me not to ride away,—and so I mounted, whilst Mr. Euston went into Hanway's cottage, to speak, as he said, about some dogs. Presently he came out with Luke, and said that they were going down to Sidely Bottom to talk with Jones about the pole-

cats, and that they would be half an hour away. 'And so,' said Mr. Euston,—'if you have nothing better to do, you may trot Trumpeter about a little, but don't go across the road,' which I promised not to do, jolly as any ten, to think of riding on Trumpeter. Well, sir, I trotted about a little on the turf, keeping him well in hand, for he seemed half inclined to make a bolt of it, being accustomed to thirteen stone, and feeling only eight on his back. However, I did keep him in, riding from one field to another, and enjoying myself very much, until suddenly he kicked out behind and went off like mad. I pulled with all my strength, but I might just as well have tied a rope to the church-steeple, and attempted to pull it down, for he managed to take the bit into his mouth, and then it was all over with me, I knew, though I was not much frightened at the time, until after galloping some way, I looked up and saw "Lambert's Fall" right-a-head; and then I gave myself up,—but here am I, not much the worse, and here is Trumpeter just as well as ever. 'All's well that ends well,' they say, and if we get to the warren in time, no harm will be done after all, barring my poor broken head, which is nothing. — Confound the blood, I wish it would not trickle down my face so.—Oh! never mind it, Mr. Gerard."

We were just then on the brow of a hill, which

commanded a view of the Widow Moore's cottage; indeed the cottage was at the foot of the hill, and as we looked down upon it, we beheld a little group sitting at the door—a group of three—and I said to Larry, “Would it not be better for you to stop here, and for me to go on with the horse?”

“Oh! no; I am not hurt;—besides, mother and Ella and Michael will wonder to see me in this plight, and be frightened.—I had better go on, and Luke Hanway, who knows pretty well how to doctor a dog that has spiked itself or been torn by a badger, will soon set me to rights, and plaster up my head in a jiffy.”

“Nonsense!—you shall do no such thing, Larry Moore,” said I.—“Come along with me;”—and we descended the hill in a circuitous direction, for the better accommodation of Trumpeter, who was not, like his biped conductors, accustomed to such precipitous descents.

In a few minutes, we stood before the cottage-gate; but the cottage, and its gentle indwellers, shall be described in a new chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COTTAGE AND ITS INDWELLERS.

“ On Devon’s leafy shores, a sheltered hold,
In a soft clime encouraging the soil
To a luxurious beauty.”

WORDSWORTH.

“ No plot so narrow, be but nature there—
No waste so vacant—but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to love and beauty.”

COLERIDGE.

I wish, reader, that I could open my portfolio, and show thee a water-colour drawing, done in the right Copley Fielding style, of the Widow Moore’s rustic cottage, and of the picturesque scenery around it. Peradventure, thou hast visited Devonshire; then thou hast seen the sweetest shire of England—“ in my opinion,” as the poor

Spanish Hidalgo said to Lazarillo de Tormes, "*the delicatest bit*"* in the country. Lookest thou for coast-scenery? there is the bay of Tor;—for river-scenery? there is the woody Dart;—for inland-scenery magnificently extensive? there is the view from the top of Haldon, whence thou mayest see the distant ocean, the Exe, the Teign, and Powderham woods, and, on the other side, the city, with its beautiful cathedral sleeping at the foot of the hill.

After all, language is but a poor instrument to draw pictures withal. Sentences are but sorry scene-painters, and a few strokes of the pencil more effective than a multiplication of words. Nevertheless must I attempt a description, though I would fain throw aside the pen, and take up the pallet in its stead.

It was a thatched cottage, in a winding lane, standing at the foot of a hill, or rather at the juncture of three hills, and almost buried in trees. It stood as it were in a sort of cove, sheltered rearward and on either side; but from the front you looked along a valley, and could see the river

* See the "Adventures of Lazarillo de Tormes," by Don Diego de Mendoza.—"How," cried the 'Squire, interrupting me,—"*an ox-foot?*"—"Yes, sir," said I; "*an ox-foot.*"—"Ah? then," quoth he, "thou hast, in my opinion, the delicatest bit in Spain; there being neither partridge, pheasant, nor any other thing, I like nearly so well as that."

gracefully winding, and catch a distant glimpse of the blue ocean, and of the smoke from the little seaport town which stood at the mouth of the * * *, from which it derived its name. Almost in front of the cottage, a shallow streamlet intersected the road, and there was a little bridge across it, for the benefit of foot-passengers, made by a large block of granite set horizontally upon two other pieces, on opposite sides of the brook. At the back of Mrs. Moore's cottage was the fountain whence the waters proceeded, and it was said to be the purest spring in the whole county of Devon: the farmers would bring down their horses to water them at this brook, and many of the neighbouring gentry would send for daily supplies of the rare elementary treasure it yielded in such profusion.

The cottage stood in a little garden, flanked with trees of various descriptions. The climate was so mild, the spot so sheltered, and the soil so eminently productive, that there was scarcely a season of the year when this little garden appeared not to be quite full. Now indeed it was almost over-stocked, such a profusion of many things did it exhibit, some beautiful and some homely, some flaunting in their gay attire, some creeping humbly along the earth, some growing there for household purposes, some merely to gladden the sight, some perchance unbidden, yet the widow Moore was a

model of neatness, and if she suffered some few weeds to abide in her little garden it was only because she doubted whether they might not possibly be flowers.

The tall holly-oak was there, lifting up its stately head, and the many-coloured carnation, and the rose with its mossy calyx, sweetest of all flowers; and there was a large blue hydrangia keeping watch upon either side of the cottage-door; and there were lilies, which emitted an odour sickly as their own pale hue: and here and there a gorgeous sun-flower, and a pendulous red fucia, shaking its graceful bells. And upon the other-side of the gravel pathway, which led from the wicket gate by the road-side, up to the cottage porch, were fruits, and herbs, and other useful plants to be seen in homely array, courting not the admiration of the passer by, but more valued by the dwellers in that little tenement than their gayer brethren of the garden.

The cottage had a thatched roof with windows peeping out of the thatch. The walls thereof had originally been white, but now there was scarcely a glimpse of the bare fabric to be seen; for a vine, and a passion-flower, and a gigantic rose-tree had entirely overgrown the building, mingling their leaves together, and the tendrils of the two former plants clinging to, and intertwining with, one another. The roses peeped into the chamber windows, upon the ledges of which you might see

some pots of branching geranium, and bunches of unripe grapes hung down, giving promise of a plentiful vintage. The cottage porch was a complete bower of jessamine ; indeed, so luxuriant was the spreading greenery that you could see nothing of the trellice-work to which it clung. In short, the whole aspect of this humble dwelling was that of a human nest. It was beautiful ; and the bright sun, which had scarcely passed its meridian, shone cheerfully upon all things there, making the flowers more bright, and causing the waters of the brook to glitter as they streamed across the road.

On a chair just outside the porch the widow Moore sate in the sun-light with an open book resting on her knee, for she had been reading—and two fair-haired children, a boy on her right hand and a young maiden on her left, were sitting, each of them on a low stool, looking towards their mother with upturned faces, and listening, with an appearance of wrapt attention, to the words which proceeded from her mouth. A more beautiful group of figures never gave vitality to a landscape.

The widow Moore was a comely matron, some years'past the prime of life. She was an old woman indeed to be the mother of such young children, having numbered some fifty-six summers, or winters rather, for there was that in her face which told you that she had encountered the wintry blast more frequently, upon her weary pilgrimage,

than she had enjoyed the warm sun and light breezes of the milder season. Very manifest was it to all who looked upon that pale thin face, with its drooping mouth and its lustreless eyes, that long suffering had been her portion, and that beauty had once shone upon a countenance, which time could not render unseemly, nor much trouble deform. Attired in decent apparel, becoming her lowly condition, and remarkable only for the snowy whiteness of her cap and a general air of extreme neatness, she looked like a decayed gentle-woman, such as you may see in some of our better sort of almshouses, which are appropriated to the widows of the clergy.

But her children—how beautiful they were, that boy and that little maiden, sitting bare-headed in the sun. Michael and Ella, how like they were; almost might they have been taken for twins. The same light flowing hair, the same oval contour of face, the same delicately chiselled features and *perfect* complexion, marked them both, and as they sate there upon their lowly seats, they seemed to be of the same height, both tall, both slender, both graceful.

And yet they were not altogether alike, for Michael's eyes were hazel and Ella's blue; and Michael, who was the elder of the twain, was many inches taller than his sister. Perhaps the boy had seen thirteen summers, and the little

maiden one summer less ; they were both of them tall for their years, as Lawrence was, but this was all the likeness, if likeness indeed it can be called, which they bore to their elder brother. The sun-burnt face, the dark hair, the restless eyes, the sturdy frame, and, more than all, the dare-devil expression, which characterized the countenance of Larry Moore, presented a strange contrast to the fair cheeks, the yellow locks and the gentle aspects of his meek-eyed brother and sister. If either of the three resembled the mother it was Lawrence ; but the resemblance was a fleeting one, and only perceptible when certain moods of mind caused a peculiar expression to play upon the features of either the parent or the child ; indeed so transitory was the likeness, that none but a steady watcher could trace it, for it was gone almost as soon as it was engendered, like a tint upon a western sky, or a cloud-created shadow upon a landscape.

How much simple elegance, how much natural grace adorned these dwellers in a cottage ! There sate Michael with his little blue jacket, his white trousers and his laced shoes : and there was Ella with her blue-checked frock, her white stockings, without a wrinkle, sitting closely to her taper ankles, her little apron with pockets in front, and her shoe-buckles, glittering on the instep of a foot, small as Cinderella's—and though all these articles

of raiment, save the latter, were of the homeliest material, the neatness and the cleanliness thereof made them appear of a finer texture, whilst the graceful persons of the children imparted to their simple habits an aspect of superior workmanship, which in reality belonged to the wearer and not to the thing worn. Dost thou wonder, reader, that such grace should have dwelt in a lowly cottage? Thou dost; then I will answer thee in the words of one—the master-poet of his age:—

“ If ye inquire
How such consummate eloquence was bred
Amid these wilds—
A simple answer may suffice—even this ;
*'Twas Nature's will ; who sometimes undertakes,
For the reproof of human vanity,
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.*” •

And Michael and Ella Moore were the especial favourites of nature.

Having tied Trumpeter, who, under ordinary circumstances, was the gentlest animal in the world, to the wicket-gate, Lawrence and I entered the garden together. So intent was the Widow Moore upon the explanation of certain matters in the book from which she had been reading, and so intently were the two children at her feet listening to this explanation, that our approach was un-

perceived, until we stood within a few yards of the group.

“There are many good and excellent things in the world,” said the Widow Moore, “which, in reckoning up the sum of our happiness, we are wont too often to overlook. We complain of small evils, but are not grateful for small favours. We strike the balance very unfairly, setting down the absence of positive pleasure as evil, but not the absence of pain as a good. This absence of positive suffering is what our author calls a *privative blessing*. ‘The very privative blessings,’ saith he, ‘the blessings of immunity, safeguard, liberty, and integrity, which we commonly enjoy, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life.’ We ought to be thankful that we are not slaves, that we live not in constant fear, that we are not deformed, or subject to any painful constitutional disease. We ought to be thankful—” but here she paused, for Ella uttered a faint cry, and, rising from her lowly seat, exclaimed,

“Oh! my poor brother! what accident has happened to you now?”

Mrs. Moore lifted up her eyes, and in a moment she was by the side of her first-born. “Larry, my boy!—quick,—tell me how comes this blood upon your face, and why is your head thus bandaged?—some frightful accident has befallen you;”—and

the pale face of the widow woman waxed still paler as she spoke.

“ Oh ! nothing, mother,—a mere scratch.—I am not hurt, I assure you ;—but where—”

“ Oh ! my dear boy ! do not say you are not hurt. Thus is it always with you, Larry ;—you come home covered with blood, and tell me that you are not hurt.”

“ Nor am I, mother. Mr. Gerard Doveton will tell you the same story ;”—and Mrs. Moore, whose anxiety for her son had caused me to be unnoticed at first, now curtsied to me, and, having apologized for her inattention, appealed to me, with a supplicating voice, and a look which seemed to say, “ Oh ! tell me the truth, I beseech you.”

And I did tell her the truth, in a few words. I said that Larry had been thrown from a horse, but that there was no danger to be feared from the accident.

“ Well, mother, you see I am right ;—but I shall have sundry additions to make to the story, presently, for Mr. Gerard has not told you half ;—but, first of all, where’s Michael ?”

“ Here—here am I,” cried the fair-haired boy, emerging from the cottage-porch with a basin of water, a sponge, and some pieces of linen rag.—“ Do you want anything, Larry ?”

“Yes, Mike ;—you know Luke Hanway’s—Mr. Euston is waiting for his horse. I have often told you of Trumpeter—there he is, tied to the gate ;—be quick, there’s a good fellow. Now, mother, you may take off the bandage, and just judge for yourself.”

Larry knelt down at the feet of his mother, who seated herself, and with a gentle hand removed the bandage from the head of her son. The blood was still flowing plentifully, and Mrs. Moore began to sponge the wound, Ella holding the basin, and turning aside her head ; for, being unused to the sight of blood, she could not look upon it without a sensation of sickness, which she was unable, though she strove, to overcome. So I said to her, “Go in, and let me hold the basin, if you please.”

“Oh ! no, sir ; it is my business to do this ;—when my poor brother is hurt, my place ought surely to be beside him ;—but I am very silly, I know.—Gracious heavens ! what is Larry about ?”

The boy had suddenly started up from his kneeling posture, and broken away from his mother, who had scarcely time to utter a word before he was to be seen running towards the wicket-gate, crying out, “Michael ! Michael !” the blood streaming from his face as he went, but he taking no heed of it.—“Michael ! Michael ! for God’s sake, stop !—dear brother Michael, stop !”

Lawrence Moore passed the gate, and I ran

after him with all the rapidity that I could summon to my assistance. Dashing at full speed across the brook, he ran up the steep lane after his brother, still crying out, "Michael! Michael! for God's sake, stop!"

At length he made himself heard, and Michael obeyed his brother. He halted, and in less than a minute we both of us stood beside him.

"Michael!"

"Lawrence!"

"Are you mad?"

"Are you?"

"No, Michael;—I saw you mount—I saw you put your foot in the stirrup, and ride off on Trumpeter's back. Now, pray, pray, my brother, dismount—you know that you are nothing of a horseman;—what could have induced you to mount?—there, there, my dear Michael, get down, and lead Trumpeter to Hanway's."

Michael looked at his brother, as though he scarcely comprehended the meaning of this address. "Are you afraid that I shall throw him down," said he, "and damage the poor animal?"

"Oh! no, not that," replied Lawrence; "I was not thinking of the animal—I was only thinking of you. For the value of ten thousand Trumpeters, I would not have you mount him again. Mr. Euston might get another horse, but where could I get another brother? Mr. Euston has

plenty of money, but all the money in the world could not buy me another brother Michael. You are no horseman—you are little accustomed to riding: now, I *am*; and look at my head. There is Mr. Doveton, he can tell you that, but for him, I should now be a dead body at the foot of ‘Lambert’s-fall.’—There, Michael, you are a good fellow;—how glad I am to see you on your legs.—And you will promise me not to mount again?—You will? then I shall go back contented.”

I said to myself, “There is exceeding strength in the brotherly love of this boy. Not half an hour ago, and he looked upon *himself* as nothing in comparison with the horse, and now he sets the animal at nought; for Michael’s safety, not his own, is concerned; and Lawrence Moore loves his brother more dearly than he loves himself.”

Nor was Michael’s affection for Lawrence less intense. He had mounted Trumpeter, and set him into a gallop, because Lawrence had said to him, “Be quick;” and because he was all eagerness to return as soon as possible to his wounded brother. It had never occurred to him that there was any danger in mounting a strange horse. He had not heard the account of Larry’s accident; and if he had, the same impulse would have driven him to leap into the saddle as now, albeit he was little used to bestride an animal of any

kind. When he heard Larry's voice, calling after him, he was astonished, as well he might have been; and when he saw his brother exerting every energy to overtake him, the face of the wounded boy all besmeared with his own blood, Michael's heart stood still with anxiety, for he thought no less frightful a visitation than insanity had come upon his brother. But when the truth was made manifest to him, fear gave place to a milder emotion; and a full sense of the magnitude of Larry's self-sacrificing affection absorbed every other feeling, and his eyes glistened with tears—tears of gratitude and love. It was some time before he could articulate, and when he did speak, he addressed himself to me.—“Mr. Doveton,” said Michael Moore, “do persuade my kind-hearted brother to think a little more of himself.”

“Oh!” cried Larry, “I'm quite safe; ‘Naught's never in danger,’ says the proverb. It's not worth Fortune's while to spite *me*.”

“Oh! yes, it is, Larry,” replied Michael.—“Now, pray, pray, return directly,” and he wiped the blood from his brother's face, as he spoke.—“Do take care of yourself, and suffer our mother to bandage your poor head. Look, here she comes after you, with Ella;—now, go back, and meet her on the way, whilst I go on with the horse, lest you get into a scrape with Mr. Euston.”

Larry and I returned towards the cottage, whilst

Michael led the horse up the hill. Mrs. Moore and Ella soon met us—the former pale as a ghost, her eyes full of tears, and her lips quivering convulsively — the latter trembling all over with anxiety, and looking as though she would have fallen to the earth, but for the sustaining hand of her mother.

“My son! my beloved!” cried the widow Moore,—“your heedlessness will break my heart.—What sudden madness has seized upon you?—You rush to your own undoing—you will bleed to death;—you are faint already—I see it—with loss of blood;—lean on me. Now tell me, my boy, do you not feel faint?”

“Why, to tell you the truth, mother, I do feel rather sick,” replied Lawrence; “but only think of Michael’s rashness, in mounting that horse, Trumpeter!”

“My son,” interrupted the widow Moore,—“my son, I am thinking of *you*!”

In a few minutes, we had taken up our old position in the garden. Lawrence Moore knelt down at his mother’s feet, and his wound was soon dressed and bandaged, with a dexterity that would not have disgraced a professional disciple of Æsculapius. When the operation had been fully performed, Larry seated himself on the low stool, which had lately been occupied by Michael.—“Thank you, mother,” said the grateful boy;

“but you have yet one thing more to do, before your work will be complete.”

“And what is that, my boy?”

“To thank the brave gentleman who has saved the life of your son ;” and, as he said this, he laid one hand upon his mother’s wrist, and pointed with the other at me.

There was a book lying upon the ground, at my feet. It was the volume which Mrs. Moore had been reading, when Larry and I entered the garden. I stooped down for the ostensible purpose of picking up the book, but in reality to conceal my emotion. The title-page lay open before me ; it was Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living and Dying*.

I cannot go on with this chapter. The day on which these events happened was the first of a new hegira—an hegira of happiness and love.

CHAPTER X.

NATURE OUTRAGED BY THE MAN WITHOUT A
HEART.

“ Spawn, weeds and filth, a leprous scum
 Made the running rivulet thick and dumb,
 And at its outlet flags huge as stake
 Damm'd it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.

• • • • •
 The sensitive plant like one forbid
 Wept • • • • •

SHELLEY.

It was nearly five o'clock when I reached home, six was the dinner hour appointed, and my brother Walter had not yet arrived. This latter circumstance created not a little surprise; for it had been positively ascertained on the preceding day that the mail changed horses at the Globe Inn, Merryvale, exactly ten minutes before four; and as the landlord of the said inn had received orders to have a chaise in readiness, awaiting the arrival of the

mail, there was no reason on earth why "the Captain," as my mother called him, should not have made his appearance at Meadowbank, fifteen minutes after four at the latest, allowing for the turnpike and the hill.

"Perhaps he has been taken ill," said my mother, whose maternal solicitude called up visions of scarlet fever, small pox, and cholera morbus.

"Or may be the chaise has broken down," said Fanny, which caused my brother Arthur to laugh aloud, and to cry "What fun if it has!"

"What's that?" asked my sister Fanny, lifting up her streaming eyes from the second volume of *Vivian Grey*, "What's that about Walter Doveton? Perhaps he has been shot in a duel."

"More likely he can't get a place in the coach," said Arthur, making the most rational conjecture that had been hazarded by any one of the party.

"It's no use guessing," continued my mother; "it is plain that he's not here, and it's time for me to go and dress. How provoking!—a quarter past five, and no Walter. If we put off dinner it will be spoiled, and the cook from Merry-vale will be out of temper; and I'm getting rather hungry myself—and one hates waiting so for one's dinner; and it isn't the same here as in London, where one can hire a lot of caricatures to keep one's guests in good spirits; and the Hawkinses are such punctual people, they're sure to be here before the time;

and the Eustons—hark, Arthur, my love, don't you hear something like carriage-wheels?"

"Yes, Mummy, yes,"—replied Arthur, and he ran out into the garden, singing as loud as he could,

" See the conquering hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums ;"

whilst his doating mother screamed after him, "Take your hat, Arthur; take your hat"—an admonition which always accompanied one of these sudden transits of Arthur, and which Arthur, with singular regularity, made a point of always disregarding.

It was plainly enough my brother Walter. The old chaise came rattling up to the door with Arthur for a running footman. The glasses were up, and, when the vehicle stopped, the traveller appeared to be in no hurry whatever to lower them. The post-boy dismounted; and Arthur stood in readiness to let down the steps of the chaise, whilst my mother and sisters blocked up the door-way, fluttering with nervous excitement, and wondering whether Walter was much altered, since last they had the felicity of seeing him.

"He's asleep sure enough," cried Arthur, winking his eye at the post-boy as he spoke.

But just as he had said this a rustling, and then a rumbling, noise was heard to issue from the

chaise; the window was suddenly lowered, and a large black dog of the setter breed leaped out, with a loud yell, and came sprawling over poor Arthur, with a violence, which nearly knocked him down.

Presently another canine head, and then a human one, appeared at the window. Arthur, who speedily recovered from his astonishment at being thus embraced by proxy, stood forward and opened the door of the carriage, making a spring at the same time, which would have lodged him safely in the interior of the vehicle, a situation which he much coveted that he might be the first to welcome his brother; but unfortunately just at the very moment that he was "in the suspended impulse of his lightness," the dog, whose head had appeared at the window, the very counterpart of the first intruder, bounced out of the chaise, with a cry of exultation, and came violently in contact with poor Arthur, who was borne down bodily by this unlooked-for collision, and stretched spread-eagle-wise on the ground.

My mother uttered a faint shriek, and rushed forward to raise her fallen favourite. But before she reached him, Arthur was again upon his legs, and shaking the captain, who by this time had followed the example of his dogs, very cordially by both his hands, shouting out, "How do, Watty? glad to see you, old fellow—brought your pistols,

eh?—fine dogs, rather too familiar—have it out of them some day—just wont I, Watty, my boy!”

But “Watty” seemed in no wise disposed to return the cordiality of his brother. He looked at Arthur with an affectation of wonderment, and withdrawing his hands with all possible speed as though there had been danger in the fraternal contact, he drawled out, the tones of his voice resembling those of a French dancing-master,

“Boy, who are you?”

“Who am I?—well that’s a good one—I am Arthur, and (imitating ‘the captain’) I have the honour—to be—your brother.”

“Brother” returned Walter, fixing his glass in the corner of his eye, or rather, to speak more distinctly, screwing it up between the brow and the nose, and surveying Arthur from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, as he spoke—“Brother—ah! to be sure, my brother—how do?”

There was nothing at all to be wondered at in the loud roar of laughter, which burst from Master Arthur’s lungs, when he heard these last words of the captain’s. Walter still continued scrutinizing his brother; and Arthur said to him, when his laughter had expired,—

“Well, Watty, my dear boy, what do you think of me?—Not so bad-looking, am I?—for a brother. Mummy says that I’m a beauty—don’t think she’ll say that of you.”

Arthur was quite correct in this instance ; for Walter was no beauty. Unless indeed five feet six, and a face very much like a monkey's, make beauty, which, I think, they do not ; and such were the main attributes of the captain.

By this time my mother and sisters had congregated around poor Walter, and very disconcerted was he, when he found that not only his two hands, but his lips, were speedily laid under tribute by the fair candidates for his 'favour and affection.'—"How do, ma'am ; how do, ladies ?" drawled the captain, when his lips were disengaged ;—"Hope I have the pleasure to find you well,—and Mr. Doveton, too.—I don't see the governor,—hope nothing the matter.

"In the study, Walter," replied my mother ; "but what on earth has made you so late."

"So late, madam——."

"Well that's good," exclaimed Arthur ; "if he don't *madam* his mother, as though he were talking to the queen."

"Late, madam !" continued the captain : "you don't mess till seven I suppose ; and as yet it is hardly six."

"Indeed, Walter, but we dine at six,—we keep early hours in the country,—a little primitive or so may be," (*four* was our usual dinner hour), "but you will soon get used to these barbarisms. When at Rome, Walter, you know,—but it is high

time to dress for dinner,—we have a party;—the fact is, my dear boy, we expected you a quarter past four. Mail sets you down at the *Globe* ten minutes exactly before;—and then taking the hill into consideration, five-and-twenty minutes for the three miles.—Hope the chaise was ready for you, Walter?”

“Quite, ma’am—chaise at the door,” drawled Walter; “but just as I was going to step in, I heard a rattling and rolling in one of the upstairs rooms, and I said to myself, ‘There’s bilyard’s, (it was thus that he always pronounced *billiards*), so I walked up, and saw two fellows playing abominably bad, and then I had a turn with the marker. Thinks I, a bad specimen of Merry-vale, —never saw such a table in my life.”

I could not help thinking that my brother Walter had a method, peculiar to himself, of testifying the strength of his affection towards the different members of his family. Perhaps my mother thought the same, for she walked off to dress for dinner, directly Walter had finished the history of his game at ‘bilyards.’ Upon this ‘the captain’ began to whistle to his dogs, and the sooty quadrupeds having previously destroyed three geraniums, a fucia, and a bantam, came bounding up to their master, paying first of all their compliments to him, and then to my two sisters respectively.

“Oh! the beast,” cried Laura, in an agony,—
“he has dirtied my new habit-shirt.”

“La! poor thing,” exclaimed Fanny,—“it is only the exuberance of his ecstasy. I doat on dogs,—big dogs in particular; for they always make me think of Lord Byron’s inscription on his favourite Newfoundland:

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory,—

And — and — *so on*, with the noble burst of
misanthropy at the end—

To mark a friend’s remains, these stones have risen,
I never knew but one—and these are his’n.

As Walter had no taste for poetry, he turned aside to “settle” with the post-boy; and having done this, he entered the house and encountered me standing in the hall.

I had contemplated with mingled feelings of disappointment and disgust the scene that had been acting before me. I was disappointed, for I expected to find in Walter the manly bearing, the ingenuous frankness, and the over-running enthusiasm, which my boyish imagination had set down as the generic qualities of the military character. I fully expected to have seen my brother leap from the vehicle that brought him to Meadow-bank, with open arms and eyes bright with joy, in what Fanny would call “the exuberance

of his ecstasy;" but instead of this, after a reasonable delay, which made me think that Walter's "fashionable arrival" had been superintended by the deity Morpheus, he crept forth with a languid air and an aspect of sovereign indifference, and received the cordial embraces of his family, with a coldness which, whether it were genuine or assumed, made me shudder and turn quite sick with feelings which I will not attempt to analyze.

Walter met me in the hall and accosted me.—
"Ah! my other brother.—How do, Sir?—my brother. Ge—Ge—Ge—eh? Gerald."

God forgive me, but the answer I returned was full of bitterness. I said to Walter—"No, no, no,—not your brother,—I think not your brother,—certainly not, Sir,—not your brother."

"A cousin may be then," returned Walter,—
"at home for the Midsummer holidays;" and he passed on, leaving me alone with the reflection that I had expended my indignation to no purpose, and that my reproaches were utterly stingless, thus pointed against the obtuseness of my brother.

Then I repaired to the summer-house, which was my favourite retreat, being one of which no one envied me the possession: there I stretched myself on a rudely fashioned bench, and abandoned myself to my teeming reflections.

It is not my intention to inflict upon the reader a detailed account of those reflections, but I particularly remember to have soliloquized in language somewhat similar to this:—"I have seen to-day the two extremes of humanity,—the two extremes of nature and of art. The one has enraptured, the other has disgusted me. I wish that I had been born a shepherd. We pay dearly for high civilization, when we sacrifice every genuine impulse of the heart,—when we give truth, which is gold, in exchange for conventionalities, which are tinsel. I think that one Larry, or one Michael Moore, is worth a whole regiment of Walter Dovetons."

CHAPTER XI.

THE STRONG MAN HELPING THE WEAK.

“ The earth-voice of the mighty sea
Whispering how meek and gentle it can be.”
WORDSWORTH.

“ How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue. * *
Madly they frustrate still their own designs.”
SHELLEY.

I LAY some time in the summer-house, for my meditations, becoming more and more confused, at length terminated in a dreamy slumber, from which I was aroused by a noise resembling a “view halloa.” I started up, and soon discovered that it was almost dark: I felt somewhat chill, for the damps of evening had been falling around me, and I was but partially removed from their

influence. Somebody stood before me ; but I could not distinguish the face of the visitant.

Presently I heard a voice, saying, —“ Well, Jerry, my boy—been napping ; eh, my fine fellow ? That’s what I call somewhat unsociable ; but as the mountain would not go to Mahomet, you know—Come, jump up, and join the party in the drawing-room.”

It was Reginald Euston. A fine young fellow was Sir Willoughby’s eldest son. He was about five-and-twenty, tall, and well-proportioned, with an open, rubicund countenance, bright eyes, black hair and copious whiskers to match. His face beamed with good nature and good health. My father called him “ a proper young gallant,” and my sister Laura was in love with him.

“ Come along,” continued Mr. Euston,—“ I missed you—all dinner time I was thinking, what can have become of Gerard ; so I left the dining-room, with half my quantum of wine, to go in search of you, and lo ! I have, at length, discovered the lost sheep.”

I thought all this very strange. Few had ever sought me before. I felt grateful, though I scarcely knew for what ; and I said, in a low, melancholy voice, “ I did not think that any one would miss me. My absence generally occasions more satisfaction than regret.”

“ Does it ?” exclaimed Reginald Euston —

“no, no, boy, I can’t believe that. There is Arthur, he is every one’s delight;—if Arthur, why then not you?”

“Oh! I am very different from Arthur. We are not fashioned of the same clay. Nothing is too good for Arthur, nothing too bad for me. But it is strange that you should have missed me: how very kind in you to think of one, whom every body else forgets. I am very grateful, Mr. Euston, very grateful indeed, I am so unused to kind words, that yours will not soon be forgotten.”

“You are a very strange boy,” returned my companion;—I scarcely know what to make of you. I came here to thank you, and, instead of this, you express your gratitude towards me. I don’t know that I have done any-thing for you; but it is very certain, that you have done me a service which I shall not easily be enabled to repay.”

“I do you a service?”

“Yes, my boy—a very great one. Was it not you who saved my Trumpeter this morning, and the neck of young Larry Moore?”

“Oh yes; but I could not well have done otherwise. I merely gave the bridle a jerk.”

“You are a brave fellow, and a modest one. I like you. You are too good for such——” then he checked himself, and continued—“but, come in, and you and I will have a game at *ecarté*.”

"Thank you," said I, "but I would rather go to bed. I am not wanted in the drawing-room! Perhaps, I am vain and silly; but I hate to have sharp words spoken to me at all times, and they are terrible in the presence of strangers."

Reginald Euston seated himself on the bench beside me, and took one of my hands into his own. "Then," said he, "if you will not come with me, I will stay with you, Master Gerard."

The tears stole down my cheeks, and I felt glad that it was almost dark. There was exceeding kindness in the tones of Mr. Euston's voice, as he addressed me—it was not the kindness of a patron, but of a friend, and I valued it accordingly. I had often heard him converse, but never in such language, or in such a voice, until now.

"No, sir—no, Mr. Euston—it is damp and cold, you had better go in; besides—besides"—

"Besides what?"

"Every body will miss *you* from the drawing-room."

"Of course they will, because I am the son of Sir Willoughby Euston, Baronet, of Fox Hall, in the county of * * *"—and he said this in a sneering voice, indicative of supreme contempt.

"Oh! no," said I, "for your own sake"—

"For the sake of the broad acres, which will some day be mine—Do you know," he continued, in a playful voice, "I am a person of some im-

portance in the county. Your mother likes to have me at her parties, and Miss Laura sets her cap at me, I see—and your brother—by the bye, that brother of your's is rather a strange fish.”

“What, Arthur?”

“No—the Captain, as they call him—Now, I'll tell you what; we'll go in together, and have some fun, Gerard—at the risk of a little rudeness, I'll pay all my attentions to you. I'll take great pains to amuse you, talk to no one else, agree with every thing you say, and praise you up to the skies. You say that you are neglected—it shall not be so to night. ‘He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.’ I will make you, in five minutes, of more consequence than any one in the room, and make certain persons die with envy, if you will but assist me in this plot. I say this at the hazard of being thought self-conceited;—but I cannot help seeing that all your family, save yourself, think no little of being noticed by me—an humble individual as I am: well, what say you to the scheme?”

“I do not like it; and I'll tell you why. At present I am only neglected: if you cause me to be envied, I shall be hated.”

“Think again, Gerard.”

I did think again, and unfortunately I thought of the last unkind words, which had wounded me: I thought of my mother's frowns and my sisters'

sneers, and my father's look of cold indifference ; and a desire, which I had never known before, took possession of me, and I ceased to remember any longer that it became me to forbear.

The offer that had been made to me was tempting. I was not without vanity, for sensitive minds are generally vain ; and the constant mortification of this vanity, which attended my neglected condition, was not the least of the sufferings I endured. I had been despised ; and now an opportunity presented itself of proving that I was not so despicable in the eyes of all people, as in those of my own family. I thought that I was now about to achieve a victory over my mother and my sisters ; and the feelings with which I anticipated this triumph were as unworthy as the triumph was worthless. I exulted, but there was a greater leaven of vanity than of vindictiveness in my exultation. I desired not to humble others so much as to exalt myself.

“ Well, my boy, have you thought again ?—second thoughts, you know, are always best.”

“ Yes ; and I have made up my mind to do according to your suggestions. Let us go in ; but, first of all, I must adorn myself.”

“ Well — be quick ; in the meantime I will saunter about the garden.—Would that I were a poet, Gerard, to apostrophize the rising moon.”

I went into the house, and, taking a hand-lamp

which some one had left upon a slab in the hall, I bounded up stairs, and was soon at the top of the house; and in the attic, which was my dormitory, I donned my best apparel, and washed myself, and did all that I was able to do for the enhancement of my natural comeliness. I sprinkled water upon my hair, and combed it until it curled all over, for it happened to be unwontedly long, and it wanted but little persuasion to dispose itself into clustering ringlets; and when I had done this, I descended;—but I paused opposite the door of my mother's chamber, and I entered,—smile not, reader, at my vanity,—to survey myself from head to foot in the full-length mirror which stood there, and my survey was satisfactory. I chuckled, as I said to myself, “The poor, despised, unloved boy is not quite destitute of beauty.” My cheeks were flushed with excitement, and my eyes glistened with the anticipation of triumph; and I drew myself up to my full height, and I expanded my chest, and I practised a smile, and I felt that even I, Gerard Doveton, might some day aspire to be loved.

I joined Reginald Euston in the garden. We entered the house together, and as we were passing through the hall, he stopped to scrutinise my altered appearance. “By Jove, Gerard!” said he, “you are better-looking than Arthur now; and as for Walter, he's a perfect fright. I'll be

hanged, if you ar'n't the beauty of the family, whatever Mrs. Doveton may think. I'll back you at even against the field.—Even on Gerard, and no takers.—Now for it, my boy !”

We entered the drawing-room, Mr. Reginald Euston leaning upon my shoulder in the most affectionate manner imaginable, and looking as much pleased as if he had just won a steeple-chase upon Trumpeter.

There were several persons assembled in the drawing-room ;—indeed, all our visitors had arrived. The gentlemen, after a repetition of summonses, had just deserted their wine to join the tea-and-coffee-drinking assembly, which consisted of the ladies who had dined with us, and those less-favoured individuals who had only been invited “to come in the evening.” My mother was sitting on the sofa, between two elderly ladies, from whose vicinage she seemed anxious to escape, casting every now and then an uneasy look towards the door, as though she were expecting the entrance of some very important personage. My brother Walter was lounging upon an ottoman, after a very lack-a-daisical fashion, and playing with a cup-and-ball, as though there were none in the room at all worthy of his notice. My sister Fanny had made a “dead set” at poor Mr. Wilfred Euston, a young gentleman, much unlike his brother, of a pale, consumptive, studious appear-

ance, who was destined for holy orders, or more probably for an early grave; whilst Laura was being bored to death by Dr. Croaker, the parson of our parish, whose favourite text was, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, saith the Preacher."

Two hired waiters, from Merry-vale, were bustling about, coffee-room fashion, with cups of tea, sugar, cream, biscuits, and such like appurtenances. Everybody looked uncomfortable, and my poor father quite wretched.

The entrance of Mr. Euston and myself created, as was intended, a sensation. My mother, who had flattered herself that I was safely in bed before this, and had replied to all inquiries concerning me, that the "dear child" was not very well, looked astounded when I entered the drawing-room with Mr. Euston leaning on my shoulder. We advanced into the centre of the room, and then, my companion watching me as earnestly as though his life had depended upon my behaviour, with all possible grace, I glided away from him, and passing from one person to another, I welcomed all my mother's guests, my face radiant with smiles, and my manner full of animation. I had some kind speech, or some solicitous question, for every one; and several of the ladies kissed me, and called me their "sweet boy,"—for ladies, and young ladies in particular, are very fond of caressing children; and when I returned to Mr. Euston,

he whispered into my ear, "Bravo!" and, placing his arm again on my shoulder, he began earnestly to converse with me.

I made some inquiries relative to the Moores, and he told me all that he knew of their history; then, in turn, he put some questions to me, concerning school, and my master, and my school-fellows, and — which astonished me more than all — my studies. He seemed to be a good scholar, and he dwelt earnestly upon the advantages resulting from a classical education. Then he asked me if I had formed any friendship at school. "I ask not," said he, "whether you have any *friends*, but whether you have *a* friend. *Friends* are only acquaintances; but 'a divine friend, by God's appointment,' as Plato, or some other philosopher, calls it, is like a winner of the St. Leger,—you are lucky if you own one in your life."

To this speech, so characteristic of the man, half philosopher, and half sportsman as he was, I made answer, "Yes, Mr. Euston, I think that I do possess a friend in a boy of the name of Hawker."

My brother Walter, who was lounging close beside us, now hearing the name of Hawker, lifted up his languid head, and drawled out, "Ah! Hawker—dare say the son of the Colonel.—Best shot in all England,—wrote the 'Advice to young

Sportsmen,'—great friend of mine,—capital fellow, and all that sort of thing."

"Mr. Doveton," said Reginald Euston, turning towards my brother, and pinching my ear as he spoke; "may I ask, Sir,—I beg you pardon,—whether Major Longbow belongs to your regiment."

"Longbow!—no, not in ours,—two Majors, Crosby and Drake,—don't remember name in the army list,—may be, has sold out."

"Probably," replied Mr. Euston, turning away to conceal his mirth; for there was something extremely ludicrous in the obtuseness of my brother Walter.

"Don't take at all," he continued in an under tone,—“one would have thought that 'twas plain enough; almost as plain as his face, and yet not intelligible to the captain."

At this moment, my mother approached us, with a pack of cards in her hand. First of all she looked a few daggers at me, and then putting on one of her blindest smiles, for the benefit of Mr. Reginald Euston, she said, in a most insinuating voice, "I hope that you will honour the whist-table. Will you favour me by drawing a card that we may see who has the luck to be your partner."

"Thank you, Mrs. Doveton," returned the son-

and-heir of Sir Willoughby Euston, Bart. ;—" but you can make up a table I'm sure without such a bungler as myself. (Mr. Euston was a first-rate whist-player.) Besides, I have promised to play a rubber of *ecarté* with Gerard ;" and saying this he put his arm around my neck and passed his fingers through my hair.

If a look—as certain lady-novellists express themselves, and such expressions are called forcible ;—if a look could kill, I should have fallen at that moment a corpse at my mother's feet. But as looks are very harmless weapons, I had no difficulty in retaining my perpendicular, though my mother actually *glared* at me, as she said, her voice tremulous with passion,—“ With that boy ! *ecarté* with that boy !—he can't play *ecarté*, Mr. Euston.”

“ Can't he play, ma'am ?”

“ Never played in his life.”

“ Then I shall have the pleasure of teaching him.”

“ He is unteachable.”

“ No,” said Mr. Euston, with a thorough-bred air of politeness ; “ if your son learns to play cards as quickly as he learns Latin, I'll answer for it that he soon beats his master.”

“ I hope you may find it so,” said my mother.

“ I am sure that I shall, Mrs. Doveton. Did ever such a head as that—” and Mr. Euston lifted up the curls which partly concealed the ex-

panse of my forehead."—Did ever such a head as that belong to an unteachable boy?"

This was too much for my mother. She walked away in an ill-concealed passion, and had it not been for her assembled visitors, she would have thrown herself upon one of the sofas and cried for very vexation.

I pitied her; but Mr. Euston seemed satisfied with the effect produced by his machinations. He smiled, and took me by the hand, and led me to an open card table. "Now," said he, taking up a pack and casting out the superfluous cards, "I will explain to you in a few moments the principles of this simple game," and then he went on with his explanations, until he was satisfied that I fully understood them, and forthwith the rubber was commenced.

I won the first game and lost the second, and fortune seemed to favour us both in almost an equal degree. I thought that the ingenuity of man could not have invented a more uninteresting diversion, but as *ecarté* was only the means whereby I was to accomplish a certain end, I continued playing with all my might, and pretending to be much edified. My sister Laura stood by, a much-interested spectator of the game, thinking that in common civility, Mr. Euston must ask her to "take a hand;" but she was disappointed: at the conclusion of each game, she looked beseech-

ingly at my partner to no purpose;—her heart fluttered, and then again was still, and she watched Mr. Reginald's every motion, and she offered to bet against him, and she did all that she could to assure him that she very much wished to play; but her hints were unavailing,—her efforts profitless; Mr. Euston would have nothing to say to her. Those two charming words "I propose," were not destined to be addressed to Miss Laura.

Not far from our card-table sate Fanny and Mr. Wilfred Euston. They were talking about Lord Byron's poetry; and Fanny, in her Arcadian phraseology, was extolling the "melodious sublimity," as she called it, of Childe Harold. I do not quite think that her criticisms would have made the fortune of the *Edinburgh Review*, in the "palmy days" of Jeffery and Hazlitt, but they were uttered with such emphasis and volubility, that had you only caught a word here and there, you might have thought that a De Staël was speaking.

I did not pay much attention to this dialogue until it happened that, whilst my partner was dealing, I caught the words "noble burst of misanthropy," and remembering that I had heard the expression in the morning, I immediately registered it in my mind as one of my sister's pet phrases.

"Can anything," said my sister Fanny,—“can

anything that has evaporated, or, rather emanated from the intellect of man, compare with that noble burst of misanthropy in the third Canto of *Childe Harold* :—

‘ I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of those high mountains and the hum
Of human cities torture me to be
Classed among creatures ; ’ —

and so on. You remember the passage, Mr. Wilfred,—beautiful!—quite worthy, is it not, of the creative genius of a master-mind?”

Poor Wilfred Euston smiled, and it was wonderful that he laughed not out-right, at the tremendous *hash* my sister had made of this ill-fated stanza of the “*Pilgrimage*.” I felt that she was talking great nonsense, and thinking to rebuke her, I said, “It appears to me, after all, that there is nothing *very* noble in misanthropy.”

“You are a foolish child, and know nothing about it,” replied my sister Fanny, with a toss of her head;—“what should a baby like you know about Lord Byron’s poetry?”

“I know,” said I, quoting one of the *memorabilia* of my friend John Smith, “that his philosophy, at all events, is odious.”

I know not what Fanny would have replied to this, if Reginald Euston had not laid down his cards and said, “I rather think, Miss Doveton, that your brother is quite correct in his estimate

of Lord Byron's philosophy. There is *nothing* noble in misanthropy. It is noble to love, not to hate,—to seek, not to shun your fellows,—to withhold your sympathies from none, but to suffer them readily to flow over all. The wisdom of moroseness, and the nobility of hatred I have never been able to comprehend. I acknowledge my dullness in this respect, but I have escaped the Byron distemper, and have never turned down my shirt-collars, nor puled about the miseries of life, nor levelled a broad curse at humanity, nor denied my God for effect. All these things may be deemed worthy of imitation, but for my part I think that they are better eschewed. Give me cheerfulness and content for my wheel-horses,—love and faith for my leaders, and I'll answer for it that nothing will pass me along the high-road of life:—Give me such a team as this, I say, and if the Byron Mail beats me, I'll be——" here he pulled up short, and remembering that he was speaking to a lady, he checked the incipient oath, and continued, "I'll be well content to never mount the coach-box again."

Having said this, Mr. Euston took up his cards, and looking significantly at me, he put the question, "Do you propose?" to which I responded, "Four," and the game of *ecarté* was continued.

We had not played very long before my mother, who had just "cut out" of the whist-table,

came up with my sister Laura to remind Mr. Euston of a promise that he made to join them in a gipsy-party to an old ruin, about six miles distant from Merry-vale. "Remember that to-morrow is the day," said both the ladies in a breath;—"we start at one, and lunch at the Abbey.—I hope to goodness that it will be fine."

"So do I, for I like pic-nics," returned Reginald, and Laura's face brightened up as he said so.—"By the bye, Gerard, how do *you* go?—Mrs. Doveton, what seat in what carriage have you allotted to this fine boy of yours?"

"To him!" replied my mother,—"to Gerard? we have no room for him at all."

"I am glad of that," said Reginald Euston.

"Are you?" said both the ladies.

"Yes, *very*—and I'll tell you why,—I shall have my team out to-morrow, or as ladies usually call it, my 'carriage-and-four,' Mrs. Doveton,—and I will call here for Gerard, punctually at one, unless he would like better to breakfast with me at the Hall, and look over Sir Willoughby's collection of stuffed birds, which Audubon says is the best in the kingdom. I think that *would* be the wisest plan; and I will send one of the boys with little Fairy, in the morning, to Meadow-bank that you may ride up to the Hall.—You are not afraid, Gerard,—are you?—of trusting your neck to my coachmanship, and of sitting beside me on

the box, for I shall take no inside passengers to-morrow, save and except a few hampers of prog, and a little champagne for the ladies."

To this I could make no answer, for my heart was exceeding full. I looked at Mr. Euston, and then at my mother, and then my head drooped, and my eyes swam with tears, and I just contrived to falter out, "Thank you;" and then, with a last desperate effort to conceal the intensity of my emotion, I threw down a whole pack of cards, and suddenly disappeared beneath the table.

This stratagem was crowned with success: when I had collected the *disjecta membra* of the ecarté pack, and had wiped my streaming eyes and swallowed down my rising tears, I felt more calm, and again appearing above the table, I saw that my mother and Laura had departed to the other extremity of the room.

I asked Mr. Euston if he would accompany me into the adjoining room, and take some slight refreshment,—a glass of wine, or lemonade, or milk-punch; as the evening was oppressively warm, and I was quite faint with extreme thirst, and almost in a state of fever produced by over-excitement, I rejoiced when he accepted my invitation. My mother had gained her point, as indeed she generally did, and the refreshments *were* laid out in the study. When we entered, my father was

there ; he was standing by a side-table and pouring out a tumbler full of wine. He did not observe our entrance : there was no one else in the room, and I saw him gulp down this *magnum* of Madeira, not indeed as a drunkard swills the much-loved beverage, but as a sick man pours down the medicine, which is destined to alleviate his malady. My father's malady was extreme dejection ; and I thought that he was resorting to a vinous stimulant for an access of artificial strength to carry him through the miseries of the evening. And so it was,—for my father's melancholy was of a nature that is cherished, not stifled, by the contemplation of surrounding gaiety ; glad faces, festive attire, the mere aspect of a social congregation awakened many painful memories, reminding him too keenly of what had been, and, worse still, of what ought to be.

“ Ah ! Mr. Euston,” said my father, “ I am glad that one of my boys is taking care of you. I ought to have done this myself, but indeed, Mr. Euston, you see in me a being like Shakspeare's *Lear*,

“ A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.”

I have no energies ; you must lay my neglect to the score of debility, not of rudeness. Do not conceive that I affect you not, because my tongue is silent and limbs idle.—Mr. Euston, bear with

me and my infirmities ;"—and having said this, before Reginald could reply, my poor father had quitted the room.

"The governor is dreadfully low to-night," said Mr. Euston, as he sipped his lemonade.

"Thus is it always with him," said I ;—" alas ! for my poor father."

When we returned to the drawing-room, I saw that the card-party was broken up. My mother was trying to look amiable, but it was plain that her face wore a mask. She was uneasy and unhappy ; for it was scarcely ten o'clock, and her guests were beginning to look tired. They would not amuse themselves, and she did not know how to amuse them. The conversation, or rather the *talk*, for it deserved no more dignified name, flagged awfully ; and the room was very hot, and the candles gave a bad light, and Walter had gone out to smoke a cigar in the summer-house, and Arthur, who would not go to bed, had fallen asleep on the sofa, and no one would ask Fanny to sing, though lights had been placed on the piano ; and, altogether, things were out of joint, and the party was likely to prove a failure.

My mother and my sisters looked so distressed, that I not only pitied them most cordially, but I actually began to upbraid myself for having, in some degree, assisted towards their discomfiture. I have always derived more anguish from the con-

temptation of another's failure, than from a sense of failure in myself. I have often failed, but 'the punishment of an unaccomplished purpose' has never weighed heavily upon me: I always say, "I have been vanquished this time, but I am determined that my next effort shall be victorious;" and then I begin to *act*. But when others fail, I can only look on, and think what may be their sufferings, and magnify those sufferings in my imagination, until I am quite wretched; and thus was it upon the present occasion, that I regarded my mother's failure with feelings of intolerable anguish; and I am convinced that I suffered more keenly than she suffered, albeit I could read much wretchedness upon her brow.

The exclusive attention that Reginald Euston paid to me was one of the main sources of her discomfort. My sister Laura, under the auspices of her mother, had made a most elaborate toilet; and they had purposely invited no other spinsters to be of their party, that my sisters might be quite certain of engrossing the two Messieurs Euston. But it so happened, that my provoking appearance, at the very commencement of the campaign, rendered all their schemes miserably abortive; and Laura's new dress and new hunting song, which she had got up expressly for the occasion, to captivate the eye and ear of Mr. Euston, were, through my agency, entirely thrown away; and I

could not help upbraiding myself for having conduced to poor Laura's disappointment.

My sister Fanny's *Album* was produced, and then Laura's portfolio. These magnets—for our guests were *in extremis*,—had the effect of attracting five or six people to a round table in the middle of the room. This was a sort of forlorn hope, and it was crowned with a partial success. The drawings, which were by no means first-rate, were handed about from one to another; and as the epithets "beautiful," "charming," and "lovely," were being applied to each picture in succession, the clouds began to roll away from my mother's brow, and Laura's eyes to brighten up afresh. But, alas! their delight was evanescent; for just as Dr. Croaker had pronounced one of Laura's Holy Families to be "splendid," and "fit for an altar-piece, only rather too small," the door was seen to open, and a figure, which, if it had been a pale-faced spectre, could not have stricken my poor mother with more intense consternation, was seen to approach the table.

It was one of our maid-servants—a stout-limbed Devonshire lass—and, with a heavy tread, she bounced up to the table, beside which my mother was standing. It was an awful moment; Mrs. Doveton turned pale, whilst the girl, quite unconscious of the agony she was inflicting, extended a large red hand, which clutched a small blue-and-

white teacup ; then she uttered, in her own peculiar dialect, certain words, which caused my mother's face to work convulsively, and to grow livid with passion, whilst Mr. Euston raised his handkerchief to stifle an incipient burst of laughter, and an almost universal smile was to be seen on the countenances of our assembled guests. And what were those dread words ?—" If you please, ma'am, the tea for the washerwoman !"

CHAPTER XII.

REACTION.

“ Oh ! those are bitter tears
Which the remembrance of an unkind act,
Or e'en an unkind word perhaps not meant,
A harsh tone, or a wrath-bespeaking look
Calls into being——” MS.

“ *If you please, ma'am, the tea for the washer-woman !*”—How laughter-moving, and yet how terrific, was the effect produced by these few words. There was something to a common spectator irresistibly ludicrous in the whole scene—the half-awkward and half-impudent look of the girl, with her shining face, and red arms bare to the very shoulder—the visible consternation expressed by the distorted features of my mother, in which it would be difficult to determine whether

anger or distress were paramount—the different stratagems to which our guests had recourse, to conceal their propensities to laughter; one walking off to the window, another rivetting his eyes on the Holy Family, a third making use of his handkerchief, and a fourth letting it drop. And then the words that the girl had uttered, “suggesting dim reminiscences” of soap-suds, and fat women, and clothes hanging out to dry. Altogether, it must have been a rich treat to a spectator with a keen sense of the ridiculous.

To tell the truth, this happened to be the eve of a great wash; and as the lady, who had been hired to preside on this occasion, was expected to arrive at dawn of day, our Abigail, with a discreteness worthy of her scriptural prototype, had determined to take thought for the morrow, and to have all things in readiness awaiting the advent of the washer-woman. Nor was there any thing strange or unwonted in the embassy of the girl upon this occasion. She had often uttered the same words accompanied by a similar gesture, appealing to the same person, in the same room, and in anticipation of a similar event. She had often asked for the washer-woman’s tea, and as often had it been meted out unto her without once receiving a reprimand with it; indeed, she only fulfilled the behests of her mistress in so doing, and upon the present occasion she saw no reason, because there

was a gala in the parlour, why the washer-woman should go breakfastless in the kitchen. And she was right; but unfortunately for Susan, her mistress was of a different opinion, and a month's warning was the result of her mis-timed application for the bohea.

Yet ludicrous as was this little misadventure, I felt much more inclined to weep, than to laugh, over my mother's discomfiture. My cup was already nearly full. I felt as though nothing could relieve the weight that was pressing against my heart but a flood—an unrestrained flood—of tears. The excitement of victory was over; I had triumphed, and looking back upon my triumph, I thought that it was a very contemptible business, and that I was a contemptible being. In reality my exaltation had not afforded me one pleasurable sensation, and from the moment that I first beheld my mother's uneasiness, it had all been unmitigated pain. I was grateful for Reginald Euston's protection, and I fully estimated the excellence of his motives; but I could not co-operate any more with him; nor restrain my genuine emotions any longer. I had acted unkindly, and given pain to others, and I longed to withdraw into solitude that I might weep over my first deviation from the broad paths of forbearance and love.

So I whispered into the ear of my companion, "Indeed I can bear this no longer. Mr. Euston,

comfort my mother—and say something kind to Laura—and ask Fanny to sing. You will soon make them all happy—Good night, Mr. Euston—God bless you”—and I pressed his hand with a pressure of affection, and rose up from my seat beside him.

“ You are a strange boy, Gerard—good night. I will do all that you tell me—but remember to-morrow morning ; the poney shall be with you at nine.”

“ Yes, God bless you, God bless you for a kind and great-hearted man ! ”—and I rushed out of the room unperceived by all but Mr. Reginald Euston.

I repaired to my little chamber at the summit of the house, and there I threw myself upon my bed, and gave vent to a flood of tears. Then I prayed ; and when I rose up, I was strengthened, and a season of serene reflection ensued. I retraced in memory all the events of the past day, and it seemed as though I had lived many months since I shook off my morning's slumbers. I thought of the Moores, and I compared them with my own family, and the comparison was incalculably to the advantage of the humble dwellers in the cottage. My memory dwelt upon the grace and beauty of the lowly children, and my mind made many excursions into the airy realms of imagination. I thought of princes who had passed their childhood in shepherds' huts, and of high-born maidens, dwelling in obscurity, and ignorant of

their lofty lineage ; then I built up many towering castles, from the summit of which I beheld Ella Moore, no longer a peasant girl, but an Earl's daughter and my bride ; but these airy fabrics were soon dissolved, and I was again the unloved school-boy yearning after impossible things, and doomed to be the victim of disappointment.

CHAPTER XIII.

NATURE'S UNAMBITIOUS UNDERWOOD.

**"The sweetest things that ever grew
Beside a human door."**

WORDSWORTH.

**" Things, such as these, are ever harbingers
To trains of peaceful images."**

KRATS.

I SHALL not inflict upon the public a detailed narrative of our excursion to "the abbey;" but, in its place, will I present my readers with some account of the widow Moore and her children, being the substance of a conversation which passed upon the box of Mr. Euston's drag, that gentleman being the principal speaker, and I a much-interested listener.

Mrs. Moore was a soldier's widow. Her husband had been a gunner in the artillery—an Irishman,—whose steady conduct and superior abilities had raised him, after many years' service, to the rank of a warrant-officer. He had been a conductor, or an assistant-commissary of ordnance, during a great part of the Peninsular war, and was killed in the trenches at the taking of St. Sebastian, in 1813. Upon the interest of a small sum of money, which her husband had saved, added to the scanty government-pension which she received, the widow Moore lived, with her three children, in the cottage which I have attempted to describe.

Who or what Mrs. Moore had been, before she became the wife of the artillery-man, no one in the neighbourhood appeared to know. She had taken the cottage, in Grass-hill Lane, shortly after the peace had been declared, bringing with her three young children; and there she had dwelt ever since,—not exactly in “easy circumstances,” but in a situation above poverty, and she appeared to be contented with her lot. People said that she had seen better days, grounding their belief, I suppose, upon the superiority of her manners, the gentility of her appearance, and the accuracy—nay, indeed, the elegance—of the language which she commonly employed. When she spoke, or when she sate at work, or when she moved across

the room, you might have seen the gentlewoman so distinctly, that you could not have helped addressing her with respect. Her low, mild voice, when speaking,—her small, white hand, when working,—her dignified carriage, when moving,—all betrayed the secret of her birth. And yet there could be no doubt that she was the widow of one who had entered the army as a private, and died as a conductor of artillery.

She had dwelt many years at Grass-hill, and she had never once quitted the neighbourhood. Her children, beneath the roof of that cottage, had advanced in years and in knowledge; there was it, that they had first learned to read, to pray, to reflect. They remembered no other dwelling-place, and they clung to their little homestead with feelings of peculiar veneration. Perhaps, the elder boy, Lawrence, was the least fervent of the three in his devotion to their household-gods, for he was naturally of a truant disposition, and liberty was the aliment of his existence; but even he loved his home, and would sit for hours together by the hearth, or in the sunshine, playing with his sister's hair, or holding his brother's hand, whilst he listened to the words of some good book which his mother would read aloud, and explain, from her easy-chair. And, in sooth, when thus they were employed, it was quite beautiful to see them.

Michael Moore was unlike his brother in cha-

racter as well as in person. He was more gentle more subdued, and of a much more thoughtful temperament. In the clear expanse of his serene forehead, and the mild lustre of his hazel eye there was that which indicated a contemplative and sometimes a self-concentrated mind. He spake little, but his face communed with you. He would bend his eyes fondly on his sister, and take her hand into his own, and his lips would settle into an expression of fondness; and thus would he sit, not uttering a word, until the fulness of his heart overflowed, and his eyelids were heavy with tears; and then he would throw his arms around Ella's neck, and almost stifle her with kisses.

At other times, he would climb up the many-coloured hill, which rose at the back of the cottage. There he would make himself a couch of purple and yellow heath, and, baring his forehead to the summer's breeze, he would gaze around him upon the distant landscape, the blue hills, the winding river, and the far-off sea blending with the horizon, and dotted with white sails; or he would lie supine, watching the clouds as they formed themselves into grotesque figures, whilst his fancy bodied forth strange resemblances, and he beheld cities, and palaces, and giants, in the summer's sky. Never did created being more intensely enjoy his existence. With him, *to be* was to be happy;

and Michael Moore's was a wide heritage, for the great universe was his portion. He was no dreamer; he did not live, poet-like, in an imaginary world, nor fill the cup of his happiness from any invisible source, but from a fountain, a never-failing fountain, of actual and palpable delights. Were not the trees green?—were not the flowers beautiful and fragrant?—was not the air fresh, and the moss soft, and the turf elastic, and the sun warm?—Did not the birds sing to him, and the painted butterflies wanton around him, and the bees ply their tasks in his presence?—Might he not lie on the warm grass, or bathe in the cool element, or run through the thin air, and no one dispute his right to such enjoyments? Happy boy!—nature appealed not to his pure young soul in vain; nor spurned he the rich gifts which were laid at his feet, because his brethren were suffered to partake of them.

Nor was this all; for Michael Moore was not content to read only the surface of things. His was an inquiring mind: it was not enough for him to look upon the face of nature, and feel that it was very fair; he soon desired *to know*, and he began to investigate causes, and to penetrate, with a searching eye, the inner recesses of creation. Nor did he fail; for he was, indeed,

——— " One

Not doomed to igruranc, though forced to tread
From childbood up the ways of poverty,
From unreflecting igruranc preserved
And from debasement rescued ;*

he had wisdom, not only beyond his condition, but indeed much beyond his years ; for though he had received no lessons from any other preceptor than his mother, he had learned very much from her, and retaining firmly the knowledge that he imbibed readily, his mind soon became the storehouse of much precious and varied lore. He knew nothing of languages, it is true, unless it were the language of nature ; but he could name the stars and the flowers of the field, and he knew every bird by its plumage, and could tell you the specific properties of the smallest insect that had ever excited his attention. And he had read, too, of other countries, and the history of his own land, and he had traced the courses of discoverers upon the map, and there was scarcely a place of which he knew not the situation. Mrs. Moore had not many books, but Michael had *studied* them all ; and if I err not, to the young student a few volumes are more profitable than vast libraries. It was good for him that he could not prematurely become, as some boys do, a *helluo librorum* ; for there is much wisdom which is not in books, and

* Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

Michael Moore, circumstanced as he was, ran no risk of being seduced by the learning of human sciolists into the more than folly of closing his eyes to the wisdom of God, as unfolded in the pages of the creation. He read ; but he regarded each volume as nothing more than an imperfect commentary upon the one universal book of Nature.

And thus he went on, from year to year, increasing in wisdom and in beauty. Time soiled not the purity of his young mind, for he imbibed no pernicious knowledge, and he mingled not with evil people. He thought, and he acted no sin ; indeed he knew nothing of its existence, excepting that he had read of its denunciation in the pages of holy writ. He had seen no crime done in his presence, for he had never wandered many miles from his homestead, and then his course had always lain in the direction of the most secluded part of the country. The rude fingers of the world had not brushed off the first bloom of his innocence ; he had never hungered after things forbidden, nor drawn one single cup of pleasure from any impure fount. In the midst of beauty and love his young soul expanded flower-like ; they were his aliment, and he was always full ; he desired no more than he possessed ; lovely and full of love himself, he was a portion of that great whole of beauty, which was the source to him of such infinite enjoyment.

Equally pure, equally full of love, equally, nay, *more* beautiful was Ella. Like unto her brother, in the prevailing expression, and indeed in the lineaments of her face, there was more of the seraph in her aspect; for her eyes were deep blue, as an Italian sky; and her figure so light and fragile, that when she *glided* from one place to another, you would scarce have thought that she was a material being. She was one year younger than Michael, but many years behind him in knowledge; for, although she was an apt scholar, and thoughtful withal, she had not the inquisitive mind of her brother, and she was more contented with the superficial, as woman indeed ought to be. Ella Moore was most truly maiden-like; she seemed to have an intuitive perception of all that it became girlhood to be; she never aspired beyond her proper sphere; nor suffered herself to descend below it. I have seen her when a transient ebullition of feeling has betrayed her into what she deemed an excess, shrink back as though she were frightened at her own boldness, and assume a more becoming serenity. And it was nature, not art, that restrained her; she had not been taught to school her emotions, and she knew nothing of conventional obligations; she was regulated in all that she did, by an innate sense of the beautiful and becoming, and if she had been raised from the cottage to the palace,

she would have graced her elevated situation equally with her more lowly one.

I have heard people talk of boisterous extravagance and rude exhibitions of uncontrolled feeling, and say that it is "Nature speaking out;" so it may be, but Nature has many voices, and knows as well how to whisper as to call aloud; and it whispered from Ella. It is as natural in some minds to control their emotions as it is in others to vent them; and surely it is more becoming to control them, for "*moderate* passions," as the moralist* has written, "are the most affable expressions of humanity." And all was moderation in Ella,—all was quiet,—all subdued,—all beautiful. An under-current of deep feeling flowed tranquilly on, and if it were not always inaudible, it never gave forth any sound more noisy than a gentle murmur.

But how fondly Ella loved her brothers,—how incessant were the little acts of kindness which manifested the endurance of that love! How watchful was she,—how unwearying her attentions,—how manifold her domestic charities! Small cause had she for forbearance, and little tasked was her patience, it is true, for she was cherished, even as she cherished, but she ran the race of love with unfailing strength, and it is certain that none outstripped her. Mother, brothers,

* Owen Feltham.

sister, children, all made one great circle of love ; and perhaps there never was a home which harboured fewer unkind thoughts than that little cottage at Grass-hill.

I think that the elder boy, Larry, shared most of his mother's love. She certainly watched him more closely than she did either Michael or Ella ; but this may, and it is natural that it should, have been, because the redundancy of his animal spirits, and his excessive love of liberty, which made him often a wanderer, caused her to feel more inquietude on his account and required greater vigilance on her part, than did either of her other two children, all quiet and gentleness as they were. Indeed, Larry's restless temperament might well have awakened serious apprehensions in the breast of a less doating mother than the kind-hearted widow Moore.

There were few things which afforded Larry Moore more delight than angling in the river. Sometimes he would persuade Michael to accompany him ; but Michael, whose gentle heart revolted at the thought of inflicting pain upon the smallest sentient thing in the creation, found little that was congenial to his disposition in his brother's favourite pursuit. Yet sometimes he would so far yield to Larry's solicitations, urged as they always were with an earnestness almost irresistible, as to become the companion of his excursions

along the banks of the beautiful river, whose serpentine course lay through the neighbourhood of Grass-hill, scarce six furlongs distant from their cottage.

But they had many miles to walk ere they reached Larry's favorite haunts, for that part of the river which watered the fields about Grass-hill, was little suited to the purpose of angling, being under the influence of the tides; and these walks were much enjoyed by Michael, for he delighted in the companionship of his brother, and moreover he knew that his presence had a restraining effect upon Larry, which prevented that thoughtless boy from committing many an unwise act, exposing him to unnecessary danger. Besides, as they went along he would stop to pick the wild-flowers in his way, and he would cull various samples of heaths and other vegetable productions, which he would carry home with him to study in the evening. And when they halted, and Larry prepared for action, he would stretch himself on the warm grass, and take out the book which he had brought with him and read, that he might manage to forget the life-destroying occupation of his brother.

But Larry was not contented with this; he wished Michael to share in his amusement, and he seemed annoyed by the great want of sympathy which his gentle-hearted brother exhibited regard-

ing this his favourite pursuit. In vain Michael, with tears in his eyes, protested that he liked not the sport,—in vain he dwelt upon his utter ignorance both of the theory and practice of fishing,—in vain he declared that his inexperience would mar his brother's chances of success. Larry urged his request most inexorably, and at length Michael was forced to succumb,—his objections being over-ruled, and his arguments invalidated by his brother.

Now Michael had not said one word about his horror of destroying life, because he thought that such an avowal would give pain to his brother without saving the animals he pitied, for Larry loved the sport too dearly to abandon it for such a reason as this.

So a rod was put into Michael's hand, and the brother-fishermen sallied forth together. But day after day passed, and Michael brought home no fish, though Larry's basket was always full, and he indeed had made a point of yielding the likeliest places to the more inexperienced angler. It was strange, for as they confined themselves to ground-bait fishing, little skill was required to ensnare the unsuspecting denizens of the river. Larry wondered, and at length, one day, when the fish were being particularly obliging to *him*, he said to Michael, "Mike, just show me what kind of bait you have on."

Michael blushed, but as there was no shirking

the question, he drew his line out of the water, and merely replied, "Look."

And Michael *did* look,—but there was no symptom of a bait,—neither worm,—nor paste,—nor caddice,—nor fly,—nor gentle, was there,—nothing but a naked piece of curvated wire, with a barb, which, to all appearance, had inflicted no torture, and shed not a single drop of blood.

Lawrence burst into a fit of laughter, and there was a roguish smile upon Michael's face.

"Well, Mike, this is capital," cried the elder brother,—“yours is certainly a new style of fishing.—Now, tell me what is it that you expect to catch with a bare hook,—a trout, or a grayling?”

"Neither, Larry,—neither," replied Michael; "I omitted the bait on purpose."

"And yet you have been fishing all the week as intently as though you expected to catch a ten-pound salmon at the least."

"It pleased you just as well," cried Michael, throwing his arms around his brother's neck, and looking beseechingly into his face, with a look, that said plainly enough, "Oh! do not ask me again."

But Larry heeded not this appealing gesture; his whole soul was in his sport; "Well, Mike," said he, "if you don't like baiting, I'll do it for you willingly enough," and as he said this he ran

off to a little brook, which flowed into the river, and raising a large stone, he took a caddice from beneath it, and returned to Michael, with the animalcula in his hand.

"Now give me the hook," said Lawrence.

"Stop; show me that animal: do you know what it is, Larry?"

"A caddice."

"And you are going to destroy it?"

"I have destroyed, as you call it, thousands."

"Have you ever seen a May-fly, Larry?"

"How can you ask?—next month, there will be millions!"

"Then let this creature live till then."

"What do you mean?"

"Ah! I thought, Larry, that you knew nothing about the history of this caddice, or you would not be so anxious to destroy it."

"I know that the fish take 'em," returned Lawrence; "and I know where they are always to be found."

"You don't know much, then," said Michael playfully;—"but let us look at this creature together."

"As you please, Mike;" and the brothers sat down upon the grass, side-by-side;—the master and the pupil.

"Now, dear Larry, look at this animal, or rather this lifeless-looking body, which seems like a bit

of hollow reed stuck about with gravel and sand;—next month it will be full of life, skimming about the surface of the river;—next month, this clumsy, almost motionless mass, will flutter about as a light-winged May-fly.”

“ Indeed! Mike;—but you know all these things, and I’m sure that you would not deceive me.”

“ You would hardly think—would you, Larry, as you see it now,—that the creature in your hand is endowed with a very superior instinct; and that this rude mass of straw and gravel, bears as much evidence of design in its construction as does Sir Willoughby’s grand house, with all its porticoes and pillars?”—

“ Go on, Mike.”

“ I have read, that this creature comes from the egg a naked white worm, and that, soon after it is born, it makes for itself a covering of fine silk, keeping only its head and its legs, which are in the forepart of the body, bare. But this case is not a sufficient protection, so the creature encrusts it all over with small shells and particles of sand, which form a compact gravelly mass, sufficient for all purposes of defence—a very citadel, in fact. Now, look, Larry, and admire the ingenuity of the creature you are about to destroy.”

“ Go on, Mike;—to hear you talk is like reading out of a book.”

Michael smiled, and, pressing his brother's hand, continued.—"But when the creature has constructed his castle in this manner, he finds that the *weight* of it is an incumbrance to him, and not being able to move about so readily as he could wish, he attaches some lighter substance, as a piece of wood, to his shell, or he enters into the hollow of a reed, or he rolls up a leaf into the shape of a little tube, and this light body serves to buoy him up, and enables him to move freely; and then he is just what you see him now, and next month he will be a May-fly."

"I should never have thought that," said Larry;—"how came you to know it, Mike?" and he looked quite astonished at the extent of his brother's information.

"Why, Larry, I am partly indebted to you for the knowledge," replied Michael; "for one day I picked up a caddice, when I was—not fishing with you, but—out with you, when fishing; and I looked at it, and I thought it a very wonderful thing; and I took it home with me, but I could not find its history in any of our books.—So I went next day to the Hall, and asked Mr. Euston's permission to find it out in his Cyclopædia, which I had more than once consulted before; and I copied the whole article, and you shall read it when we get home, for I have not

told you one-half of the wonderful properties of the caddice."

"Well, Mike, I'll be hanged, if I ever bait my hook with a caddice again."

"Thank you, Larry; you are a dear, kind brother. I told you, that I was quite sure you did not know its history, or you would not have stuck it on the hook."

CHAPTER XIV.

GLIMPSES OF LIGHT.

"Thou art sprung, too, of no ignoble birth,
Or there's no faith in instinct."

COLERIDGE.

ON the day following our excursion to "the Abbey," I called to inquire after Larry Moore, and I found that he was but little injured by the accident that had so lately befallen him. After this, my visits to the cottage were very frequently repeated; for the family of the Moores had excited within me an interest which seemed likely to endure; and I could plainly see that I was always most welcome, and that my visits to Grass-hill were hailed with delight by every member of the family.

But I said nothing to my own relatives of the

connection that I had thus formed, because I well knew that my visits to the cottage would be forbidden directly they were known. "And rightly too," some of my readers will say; "for social order must be preserved." Granted: but in those days, I had no other philosophy than that of love; and I thought that there was no wealth like affection, and that hearts, and not titles, made people noble and great.

It was a boyish fancy,—but I acted in accordance with it; and scarcely a day passed that did not see me descending the hill which conducted to the cottage of the widow. I will not attempt to describe the delight of which these visits were productive. Life, which had so lately been to me a dull, cheerless blank, was now bright with all the colours of the rainbow. There is no joy like the first draught of love, when we have thirsted after it for many years, until our soul has fainted within us from inanity. This is a trite common-place; but it often happens that the feelings which are most frequently described, are those which most rarely are experienced. There are few who know what it is to ask for love, and to be denied.

I have so much that is actual to write about, that I must not dwell too tenaciously upon my feelings; but I must repeat that even at this early stage of my connexion with the Widow Moore and her family, I felt a rooted conviction in my

mind that gentle blood flowed in their veins, and that some day I should be proud of their acquaintance. Every new visit to the cottage increased the strength of this conviction. It is true that my poetical temperament was precisely of a nature to cherish such a belief, but it would not have built up an imaginative structure of this kind, had there not been a good foundation to rest upon; for I happened to be the victim of a morbid refinement, which less than any other peculiarity of mind, would have suffered me to see perfections which did not actually exist. Indeed I was so peculiarly alive to whatever was in the smallest degree unbecoming, that I had never, until I saw Michael and Ella, met with any thing approaching a realization of my dreams of perfect humanity. A harsh tone, or an ungraceful movement, or an expression in any way indecorous had often occasioned me acute pain; and more than once had such petty blemishes as these checked the growth of a new-born attachment. It must be acknowledged that such a temperament as this was much more likely to depreciate than to over-value the real excellence of the Moores; it was my misfortune to see things too clearly, but I saw little or nothing that was unbecoming, or unlovely in these simple dwellers in a cottage. If there was any lack of gentleness it was in Larry; he had less of that consummate

elegance which adorned Michael and Ella ; he was less quiet, less subdued, less thoughtful, and the exuberance of his animal spirits sometimes made him boisterous and rude. He had not the same gentleness of demeanour, and the same innate sense of the beautiful and the becoming, as was possessed by his brother and sister. Moreover—and this deficiency was the most apparent of all—the language, wherewith he clothed his ideas, was far from being either elegant or correct, whilst the common discourse of Michael and of Ella was distinguished by a purity, and indeed an elegance of style, which would not have disgraced the gentlest, the most high-born scions of the aristocracy. Perhaps it was that going oftener abroad and mingling with other young cottagers, whose manners were rude and whose language was corrupt, he caught a little of the plebeian jargon, which was constantly sounding in his ears, and his home associations, though they tempered, did not eradicate, the disease he thus imbibed : and Larry Moore had not mind enough to overcome the disadvantages of his situation.

But a little incident happened one day, shortly after I became acquainted with the Moores, which more than any thing served to establish me in the faith that I had so readily imbibed. The Widow

Moore was reading aloud to her children some passages from Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living*, which was the good woman's favorite book, when I entered the garden, and begging her to read on, I sat down and became one of her auditors. She had selected that beautiful chapter on *Contentedness* for her evening's discourse, and as she went on, now reading and now explaining what she read, I almost began to think that there was no real evil in the world, and that Shakspeare and Epictetus were right, when they said that not things, but our notions of them, are the causes of all the sufferings we endure. *

Mrs. Moore was an able commentator; and sometimes there was great force and beauty in the illustrations she employed. There was a remarkable sweetness too, in the tones of her voice; she spoke "far above singing," and I thought, as I sat there in the sun, with Ella on one side and Michael on the other, that I would be well content to spend my whole life in listening to such beautiful words, pronounced in such beautiful accents as those which now made music in my ear, and stole into the recesses of my heart.

* *ταρασσειν τους ανθρωπους ου τα πραγματα' αλλα τα περι των πραγματων δογματα.*—See the *Encheiridion* of Epictetus; the passage is almost translated by Shakspeare.—"There's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."—*Hamlet*.

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“Poverty”—thus began the Widow Moore, enunciating in her low clear voice the lovely precepts of Jeremy Taylor: “‘Poverty is better than riches, and a mean low fortune to be chosen before a great and splendid one. It is indeed despised, and makes men contemptible;’—but my children,” and here she lifted up her eyes, and laid the reverend volume on her knees—“poverty, though evil minds may condemn it, is not contemptible in itself. It is only when we strive to appear that which we are not, that we become, in reality, contemptible. A poor, yet contented man—a man who suffers not adversity to disturb the serenity of his mind, a man—let him be ever so humble, ever so trampled upon by the world—who turns a serene eye upon his misfortunes, and says meekly: ‘Thy will be done; it is good for me that I have been afflicted,’ is not only far beyond the reach of contempt, but is indeed one of the noblest spectacles to be seen in the Theatre of Nature.”

There was nothing very novel in this doctrine, but the earnestness and the apparent sincerity, with which it was declared, rendered it, indeed, most solemn and impressive. I thought of the philosophers of the old time, and of the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and then of him who had pronounced it; and I almost began to hunger after

affliction, that I might prove the strength of my endurance.

And thus Mrs. Moore continued to read, and comment upon what she read, until she had completed her explanation of the chapter, and then she laid down the book. I thanked the widow woman for the delight and the instruction she had afforded me, adding "Why it seems, Mrs. Moore, that you are a scholar as well as a divine."

"I a scholar, Mr. Doveton?" she replied, with an evident confusion of manner, whilst her pale cheek became suddenly suffused with a hue of deep crimson.

"Yes, a *Greek* scholar, Mrs. Moore; did I not hear you read 'στειλε δωματα' just now, without let or hindrance?" I returned.

"You certainly did, Sir," rejoined the widow;—"but the truth is that our kind-hearted curate was good enough, some time ago, to put all the Greek into English characters upon the margin of this book."

Now, Mrs. Moore might have told me the truth. There was nothing at all improbable in her story, but when I coupled the confusion she had betrayed upon my alluding to her scholarship, with my previous conviction of her gentle birth, I had little doubt but that she *was* acquainted with the dead languages, though she *was* unwilling, in her

present condition, that the extent of her accomplishments should be known.

When Mrs. Moore had done speaking, I turned to Michael, and said, "Do you think that you should like to be a scholar?"

"Oh! yes, very much," replied Michael,—“I should like above all things to be a scholar.”

"Then I will teach you Latin and Greek; I will come every day to the cottage, and when I am gone—gone back to school, you shall keep my books and study by yourself, and I dare say that when I come home again I shall find that you have out-stripped your master.”

"Oh! how very, very kind you are," cried Michael, his eyes glistening with tears.—“But what will my dear mother say to this?” and he looked anxiously into the face of his parent.

"My son," replied the widow Moore, "do you forget that you are a lowly-born cottager?"

"No, mother, I do not forget;"—and Michael's head drooped like a flower, whose stem has been broken by the wind.

"Michael, has Jeremy Taylor written this lovely book in vain? Are all his sweet lessons of contentedness thrown away upon your proud heart?"

Michael wept. This was the first evil word that had ever expressed the quality of his heart,—his

"proud heart,"—those tears of anguish were **not** the out-pourings of pride.

"I did not think, mother," at length, he **said**, "that it was sinful to thirst after knowledge. I thought that knowledge was a good thing,—good alike for prince and for peasant;—but I **am** not *proud*,—I am not indeed;—oh! recall **that** bitter word, mother."

"Knowledge is a good thing," returned the Widow Moore;—but there is one knowledge for the high-born, another for the lowly cottager. **That** which is fit for the king is not fit for the beggar. Educated above your station, you will be unfit for the duties of that station. You will aspire to be a judge or a bishop, when, with your opportunities, Michael, should you turn your thoughts towards the law, you will never reach higher than a scrivener's clerk; if towards the church, than clerk of the parish. If you are not proud, I see that you aspire—again I ask, have you forgotten your birth?"

"Not wholly, dear mother," replied Michael, and there was something, either in the words or the accents that pronounced them, which caused the Widow Moore to start, as though some painful associations had been suddenly awakened in her mind.

But the embarrassment she betrayed was momentary. Her displeasure, too, passed away with that

shock. She smiled, and her face was bright with an expression of fondness, as she said, "Come here, my sweet boy, and kiss me—you are not proud: I wronged you, when I said so—nay, wipe away those swelling tears. You *shall* know, Michael,—but not Latin—there are other things more worthy to be known."

CHAPTER XV.

THE ADMONITIONS OF THE MAN OF SENSE.

“ 'Tis a good thing that we,
Who are all impulse, should be sometimes checked,
Directed and set right by them who think
Calmly and leisurely before they act.
And better still it is when our friend's Reason
Is rendered savoury by the spice of wit—
'Tis healthy to be laughed at.”— MS.

I LEFT home at the end of this vacation, for the first time, with a heavy heart. Hitherto I had always anticipated my return to school with feelings of unalloyed delight; but now I quitted my home, if such it can be called,

(“ For without hearts there is no home,”)

with many a pang of regret, and many a tear shed

to the memory of those happy hours I had passed with the Moores, in their little cottage at Grass-hill. It has been said that "stolen pleasures are sweet:" but I must say that I did not enjoy my visits to the cottage any more because they were stolen. On the other hand, the pure waters of my happiness were somewhat embittered by the consideration of the deceit that I was forced to employ. Believe me those pleasures are the sweetest which require the least secrecy, and occasion the least disingenuousness.

I think that it is old Owen Feltham, who says that "the soule is framed of such an active nature, that it is impossible but it must assume something to itself to delight in;" and as far as my own nature affords a proof, I can bear witness to the truth of this assertion. I could no more have existed without love than without air; the one was as necessary to my moral, as the other to my physical, well-being. I must have had always "some object to delight in,"—and a human object; for I hold with Cæsar, that it is censurable, if not sinful, to lavish our best affections upon soulless brute beasts.* As a child I had doated on my little brother; as a schoolboy upon more than

*Cæsar seeing in Rome one day certaine riche and wealthy strangers, having little dogs and monkies in their armes, and that they made marvellous much of them, he asked them if the women of their country had no children, wisely reproving them by this

one of my companions ; but now that Michael and Ella had appeared, like bright visions in my path, all other objects were dim beside them ; and young Hawker, the memory of whom had sustained me throughout a great part of my vacation, sunk into almost utter oblivion ; for though pleasing, he had not the fascinations of Michael and Ella Moore.

Is it possible to love on for ever, giving but receiving nothing in exchange ? Will not the milk of love, thus acted upon, at length be converted into wormwood ? I think so : we may be wronged over-much ; we may suffer till we can endure no longer. Patience and forbearance are good gifts, but they are perishable ; and if I err not very greatly, the pure strength of love cannot sustain the soul long without sympathy. Pride and bitterness are too often, I fear, the hand-maidens of unrequited affection ; and he that has frequently been denied will soon cease to ask and to desire. Thus with me ; I feel a rooted assurance, that had it not been for the timely appearance of the Moores, flashing across my solitary path as they did, all radiant with the light of love, I should

question, for that they bestowed their naturall love and affection upon brute beasts, which they should with all kindness and love bestow upon men.—*Plutarch, by Sir T. North. See Life of Pericles.*

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have been betrayed into the dark caverns of misanthropy ; for I hovered, at this stage of my journey, too closely upon those dreary confines. To speak more distinctly, at this period of my life, the constitution of my mind was about to undergo some great and fearful change for the worse—the honey of my mild nature was about to be converted into gall, when the sweetness of a new-born hope entered into my despairing soul, and bitterness passed away from me, and my salvation was thoroughly accomplished.

I returned to school; and as I approached, not the groves, but the many-windowed mansion, of Academus, the pulses of my heart throbbed with a violence which I had little anticipated ; and I discovered that my home associations had not utterly stifled within me the love which I bare to my school-fellows. That chord was not yet broken. There were many whom I yearned to embrace.

Smith had left school, and Hawker had not arrived. The latter was my prime favourite, and I eagerly panted for his return.

He came, at length : two days after my arrival, I heard it said, “ Hawker has come ; ” and I received the tidings with apparent unconcern ; for love is an arch hypocrite, and where the waters run deepest, there are the fewest ripples on the surface. I believe that this is an old simile, but it suits my purpose to employ it.

With a beating heart I turned my face towards the door of the school-room, and watched for the entrance of my friend. It was play-time; and I anticipated the delights of a stroll in the fields with my favourite companion, asking many questions concerning the past vacation, and planning many pleasures for the ensuing half-year. At length, he entered;—I sate quite still;—I did not rush forward to embrace him, but I looked at him, furtively, as it were, whilst he walked up the school-room—for he was a general favourite—shaking hands with every one he met. I wished to *try him*. It was my desire to see whether he would seek me out amongst the herd.

I heard him ask, “Where is Doveton?” and presently he stood beside me. *I looked at him*—and the pillar of my love was prostrated at a single blow. My hand hung down listlessly by my side; I did not raise it in token of friendship. I had quite done with Hawker. *He wore a tail-coat.*—

I set down things as they happened. I do not expect that many will enter into these refinements: but the singularity of this confession is a sufficient guarantee for its truth. It may appear ridiculous; but I positively declare, that my heart almost died within me, when I first beheld the altered appearance of my young friend, Edward Hawker. There was a premature assumption of manhood, as I thought, displayed in the act of

thus donning, at so early an age, the *toga virilis*; and as I had always held, that there are few sights more disgusting than a boy aping the man, I now regarded young Hawker and his coat with feelings of very little complacency. But I was much more sorry than indignant. I could not help fancying that I contemplated the grave of my friend's boyhood; I thought that now there was an end to his sportive sallies, his ebullient joyousness, his freedom, his buoyancy, his ingenuousness, and all the thousand graces of youth; for the loss of which, nothing in after years—nothing that there is in manhood—can atone. Nature had gone forth from him, and had given place to her antagonist Art; and I regarded the change with those melancholy feelings which a man, after long exile, may experience, when he finds that the rural village, where his little homestead was planted, has made way for a populous town, and that almost every vestige of the Creator has been defaced by the handicraft of man.

Hawker perceived my dismay—at least, he saw something strange in my demeanour, though he scarcely knew to what it was to be attributed,—and he took no particular note of it, well knowing that it was my nature to be eccentric. “Well, Doveton,” said he, “what news from Dreamland, my boy?”

My answer was somewhat singular, and almost

as bitter as it was strange.—“That a new species of the *genus homo* has been discovered, which naturalists call *puer caudatus*,” I replied, glancing, as I spoke, at the garment that had so much offended me.

“Oh, my tail!” cried Hawker, taking in either hand a flap of the offending coat, and shaking it with an air of mock affectation;—“my tail!—and what do you think of it?—I’ll tell you a story thereanent, as they say;—but won’t you shake hands with me, Doveton?”

I extended my hand, but I did not return the cordial pressure I received from Hawker. I was sad, but I had banished from my heart, by this time, all feelings of bitterness. I felt that I had no right to be offended, and, mastering every unworthy emotion, I spoke out with an honest impulse.—“To tell you the truth, Hawker, I don’t like you in this coat.”

“Don’t you?—Well, I won’t wear it, then: but I must tell you what made me mount it.—I wanted to be more of a man.”

“And that’s the very thing I object to.”

“Well—but listen: I found it, in the holidays, a great bore to be counted such a boy. People thought me too young for everything. I was too young to be asked here, too young to be invited there, too young to go to a ball, too young to ride on a horse, too young to fire off a gun, too young

to drink wine,—in short, I was too young for everything, but those very things I could best do without; and this state of things, Doveton, I found to be very unpleasant.”

“ But the coat has not made you older.”

“ *Yes, it has.*—I’m a bit of a philosopher; and I hold that dress makes everything. I dare say, that you know the old riddle, ‘ What is Majesty, deprived of its externals?’—*A jest.* Now, what makes the soldier, but his uniform? What makes the bishop, but his sleeves? And *what makes the man, but his coat-tails?* I’ll tell you what—I know it by experience. I bullied the governor, and got a coat; and then I was old enough for anything. People invited me to their parties, and asked me to take wine, and the girls condescended to dance with me—and all owing to my tail. By-the-bye, Doveton, I saw Smith, in the holidays, and he gave me a letter for you.”

“ For me?”

“ Yes, for you, Doveton; and I’ll answer for it, that there’s plenty of advice in it. We talked a good deal about you; and Smith thinks that you’re mad.”

“ I’m much obliged to him.—But where’s the letter?”

“ In my pocket; but I won’t give it to you now, for I want you to talk a little more with me.

Now don't you think I'm right about the dress, and that everything in the world depends upon it? I'm sure you do; for when I wore a jacket, you were all smiles, and warmth, and affection; and now you are all gloom, and as cold as a piece of ice. Now, Doveton, I'll put you to the proof;"—and Hawker ran off, and speedily returned, having substituted a little blue jacket in the place of the offending coat-tails.

"Now, Hawker, you are more like yourself. I don't think that boyhood, after all, is a thing which we should be in a hurry to get rid of. Depend upon it, that, some day or other, when we have lost it, we shall long to get it back again. Shall we go out and take a stroll in the playing-fields? How much more that jacket becomes you!—If you had the smallest spice of vanity you would not, for some time to come, disfigure yourself again with a coat.—Now tell me what you have been doing with yourself?—But first of all where is Smith's letter? I will get that business off my mind, and then I shall have nothing to think of but you: and I shall be yours entirely. Thank you—let us sit down here, and I will read the letter to you, Hawker."

We sate down together upon a grassy bank, and, with my arm round the neck of my friend, I read aloud the epistle from Smith.

“ MY DEAR DOVETON,

“ Having promised you a letter, I begin herewith to fulfil that promise. Do not, I intreat you, throw it aside, before you have half read it, exclaiming, ‘ Confound the fellow, I am sick of his eternal common-sense.’ Believe me, when you are a few years older, you will not despise that commodity as at present. You may think that you stand upon high ground, and that you will remain there ; but beware of a descent more rapid, and more fearful, than is dreamed of in your philosophy. If you will travel in balloons you must not wonder if you meet with accidents. If you will voyage through the thin air, *caput inter nubila condens*, like Virgil’s fame, instead of keeping the solid earth beneath your feet, you must not wonder if you make woeful experience of the tenuity of that air, and the hardness of that earth ; the one will betray you for presuming to dally with her, the other will smite you, in revenge, for having spurned her. Give up your aeronautics, Doveton—let the gas escape at once, and never again trust to your balloon.

“ Do not suppose that it is my object to ridicule you. If I thought that you were ridiculous, Doveton, I should not trouble myself by writing this letter. It is not much in my way to flatter, but I must observe that had I not seen in you the germs of many excellent qualities, I should never

have intruded my advice upon you, as I have done for the last two years, nor taken out my pruning knife so often to pare off all the unseemly sprouts, which disfigured the fair tree of your morality. I would see you bring forth good fruit, as I doubt not but that you will, in due season ; but you must keep watch over yourself; you must regulate your passions, you must sedulously avoid all excesses, or your fruit will fall unripe to the ground, and your autumn be a time of disappointment. I entreat you, Doveton, as you value your own happiness, not to disregard my warning.

The most amiable qualities of our nature require certain modifications. Even love, wherein you abound to such fullness, must be modified, or it will betray you into excesses not only dangerous but vicious. It is a mistake to think that what is amiable in itself must in its increase become still more amiable. Directly one good quality, by its enlargement, begins to clash against another, it has arrived at an excess which must be moderated; for one virtue administers to another, and when it ceases to do so, it changes its nature, and is no longer good. Agesilaus was once heard to exclaim, "Oh! how hard it is both to love and to be wise." Love warring against wisdom is not to be cherished, but to be cast out with contumely and disgrace. I question whether more evil does

not result from the misdirections of the better qualities of our nature than from the onward progress of our baser ones, even as a treacherous friend is more dangerous than an open enemy.

I should be almost ashamed of myself for writing down such palpable common-places, did I not feel assured that these very common-places will be much more useful, and perhaps more novel, to *you*, than the most sublime and original truths, which, were I capable of giving birth to them, I should refrain from declaring in your presence. You have too much of the original and the sublime (?) already, and what you want is a little of the common-place. I think that I see you, as you read this last sentence; but do not look so contemptuous, I beseech you,—nor utter your indignant ‘Pshaws,’—nor exclaim, ‘Groveling worm!’

“ *For man is oft-times nobler when he creeps
Than when he soars,—*”

and this reminds me that I intended to tell you, that *if you read any more poetry read Wordsworth's*, and if you can manage to do so, read it always in the open air, with a beautiful prospect before you; and, perhaps, you will learn, from this greatest of good men, how to possess yourself in lowliness of heart.

“ I do not infer that you are proud; but you

are too exclusive in your sympathies. I have heard you complain that none sympathize with you—how can you expect it when you sympathize with no one? You voluntarily separate yourself from the herd, and then complain of your solitary lot. Take it upon my philosophy, Doveton, that the world will not trouble itself to quarrel with you; so that if there should be any schism between you, be assured that you have quarrelled with the world. Come down then to the level of humanity; for he is the truly wise man who moves with the stream and yet avoids its impurities—who is content with the world as he finds it, looking upon all things with a quiet eye, neither envying those above him, nor despising those beneath him, and readily sympathizing with all. Do not think that because you have set your thoughts upon lofty matters, and indulge in high aspirations, and talk about love, and glory, and knowledge, and such like abstractions, that all meaner things are contemptible, and that you lower yourself by ceasing to generalize; for such, believe me, is not the case.

“ I have heard you talk about the delights of boyhood, and yet you refuse to share in the very sports which engender them. You talk about the beauties of the creation, and will not stoop to examine a flower—you talk about domestic happiness, and yet look with contempt upon the

woman who sits by the fire-side, employed upon the fabrication of a pin-cushion. You attach no specific ideas to the blessings, of which you speak ; how then can you expect to enjoy them ? I am afraid that these dim abstractions of yours are productive of very little happiness. But let me assure you, Doveton, and I know not how I can embody my assurances in better language than that of the poet whom I have before had occasion to cite, that

‘ The dignity of life is not impaired
By aught that innocently satisfies
The humbler cravings of the heart ; and he
Is a still happier man, who for those heights
Of speculation not unfit, descends ;
And such benign affections cultivates
Among the inferior kinds.’

Need I say more to convince you that there is no wisdom in thus always aspiring heaven-ward ?

“ If you expect to possess yourself of happiness in the lump, I fear that you are doomed to endless disappointment. It is no easier to do this, believe me, than it is to carry off a house, or a bridge, or a cathedral bodily. Brick by brick we must accomplish the task ; and a number of small pleasures, like a number of small stones, consummate the structure of our happiness.

“ Do not then refuse to take what you can get, because you are not offered all that you want. I

never knew any good arise from thus grasping at an imaginary whole, instead of contenting oneself with the reality of a part ; there is little wisdom in this rejection of small gifts, this yearning after consummate felicity ; especially as the lofty-headed traveller, who will not stoop to pick up the small blessings which lie scattered in his path, is not always the most impervious to the annoyance of the petty difficulties obstructing his way. There is very little philosophy, I am sure, in refusing to derive happiness, from the same source that supplies us with wretchedness—from trifles ; and if I am not much mistaken, I know one who will stoop to pick a poison-herb, but not to cull a sweetly-smelling flower.

You have ere now complained to me in pathetic language, that you are unloved in your own proper home,—but is not this misfortune, for I acknowledge that it is a heavy one, attributable to yourself and your peculiarities ? I do not think that your heart is at fault ; indeed I am sure that it is not ; but there may be errors of judgment, and perhaps a little want of toleration on your part, though I am very willing to believe that you have been “ more sinned against than sinning.” When I say that you lack toleration, I mean that you do not sufficiently consult the prejudices of those around you,—you do not enter into their feelings, and interest yourself in their pursuits,—you live

too much in a world of your own, and this I think is mainly the reason why you are not a favourite among your relatives, especially among those older than yourself. I do not say, neither do I wish to imply that you have a hard, uncompromising spirit; for I think that you oppose yourself to the prejudices, that surround you, only because you do not comprehend them. Let me advise you to study your own nature less, and the idiosyncracies of those around you rather more;—endeavour to look upon things with other men's eyes, and to argue with other men's arguments; be more watchful, and less thoughtful; and condescend a little to minutiae. Remember that we are judged by our actions and not by our feelings,—by that which is manifest, not by that which is latent; we cannot expect others to fathom the depths of our motives, and to penetrate the obscurity of our inner chambers of thought. What we do, not what we would do, is the criterion whereby we are judged; therefore it is not wise to neglect petty offices of kindness, which we may do at a trifling sacrifice, because we feel secure from self-reproach in the consciousness that we would be the first to stand forward, should an occasion present itself, to do a great service, at any cost, to the individual, whose less important interests we suffer to be superintended by others less zealous in reality than ourselves. People are not content with a homage

which depends upon some imaginary contingency for an existence at best adventitious, and perhaps destined never to be manifested. It is but a poor excuse for having suffered your friend to be horse-whipped, that had any one attempted to cut his throat you would have interposed at the risk of your own. Let me advise you then never to reject any opportunity of doing a kindness, merely because it is an insignificant one. In the daily intercourse of life, by these small kindnesses is our love made manifest, and if we neglect them, as I think you have done, the sincerity of our affection is suspected, and as we mete unto others so is it meted unto ourselves.

“ I have never seen you in your relation of son or brother, but it would not be difficult to draw upon my imagination for a portrait, which would most probably be correct. I can fancy you dreaming of love, and devotion, and doing, in thought, many deeds of chivalry at the very moment that your assistance is wanted in some of the petty details of ordinary life. Your hands are wanted to assist in the unravelling of an unfortunate skein of silk, whilst you have devoted them, in imagination, to the rescue of some unfortunate damsel. You are wanted to go on a message to the servants’ hall, or to put a letter in the post, whilst you are wandering self-involved in the *arva beata* of Fancy-land. Your sister is painting a picture, and your

mother working a foot-stool, but you take no interest in the progress of either the one or the other. You forget to congratulate the former on her birthday, and to admire the new bonnet of the latter. You set no stress upon these "delicate attentions," but others,—rely upon it,—feel the absence of them; and as you take no interest in the goings of those around you, those around you take no interest in you. If this be the true state of things, as I think it is, you will acknowledge that I was right in attributing your unloved condition to the peculiarities of your strange disposition.

"Errors, pointed out to you in this manner, for the most part suggest their own remedy; but I will nevertheless conclude with a little practical advice, which may serve to regulate your future proceedings. If you were a free agent I would strongly recommend to you *a few weeks in the tread-mill*; for directly your thoughts began to wander from the business immediately before you, you would infallibly be knocked down. However, in the place of this, let me exhort you to play as much as you can at cricket, at hockey, and at football. Especially, indulge in the latter recreation, for if you don't keep a sharp look out, you will get terribly mauled. I have told Hawker to keep you up to this; and he has promised whenever he can, to get on the opposite side to your highness, and to single you out for his antagonist; as he

happens to be somewhat adroit I'll answer for it that he will not suffer you to dream over your game very long before he is at hand to awaken you.

“Work hard at your mathematics, and read no other poetry than Wordsworth's. Never suffer yourself to be alone. Endeavour to find out the peculiarities of those around you, for by so doing you will have less time to brood over your own. Always be doing something, but do not be too particular in your choice of an occupation, for the greatest have condescended to trifles, and Philosophers have jumped over chairs. Read the newspapers, when you can get them; I will send you an occasional one myself: and perhaps some of your school-fellows will club for the County Chronicle. Keep an account of all the money you spend; for you cannot think yourself a hero or a philosopher, whilst you are entering six-pence for tarts, and three half-pence for marbles. Lastly, cultivate young Hawker's acquaintance, and

Believe me ever to remain,

Your friend,

JOHN SMITH.

“P. S.—I shall be glad to receive a letter from you. I go to Oxford after the long vacation: having obtained a scholarship at Queens, I am entered at that college. Direct to me,——

street, Liverpool; and take care that you attend to my counsels; for it has cost me no little trouble to draw up this long homily. Take care of yourself, and no more ballooning.

“Yours, J. S.”

“Well done, old Smith,” cried Hawker, directly I had finished reading this lengthy document. “Well done, old Smith!—there’s some sense in that letter, eh, Doveton? And what do you think of that last scrap of advice? ‘Cultivate the acquaintance of young Hawker.’”

“I think” said I, shaking my friend warmly by the hand, “that it is the best sentence in the letter; and at all events it is the only bit of advice which I am quite certain to act upon. Do you think that I shall disobey the mandate?”

“It shall not be my fault if you do.”

CHAPTER XVI.

DULCE DOMUM.

“ There are some by nature proud,
Who patient in all else demand but this,
To love and be beloved with gentleness ;
And being scorned what wonder that they die
Some living death ? ”

SHELLEY.

I AM afraid that the Critics will object against my work that the action of its plot is languid. These Literary Watchmen will be telling me to “ keep moving ; ” so I must bestir myself, and accelerate my pace, though no skilful jockey ever started his horse in a gallop. And this reminds me that the characters of a novel are something like the horses entered for a race ; first of all you see the animals brought out for the saddling—but I

know not why I need retard the progress of my work still more by an extraordinary simile.

Mine is professedly a psychological narrative. I have less to do with the outer world of action, than with the inner world of thought and feeling; and, having declared this, I trust that the reader will not subject my work to any canons of criticisms, to which it was never intended to conform; and, moreover, I hope that he will acknowledge that I have studied, to some purpose, Fielding's admirable essay written "to prove that an author will write the better for having some knowledge of the subject on which he writes," and that I have not altogether forgotten the precept of the old Greek, contained in the two words *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*, or as we translate it, 'know thine own self.'

But, to return.—I remained at Dr. Goodenough's two years and a half, after the occurrence of the events—if such they may be called,—which I have detailed in the last chapter. During this time, as may easily be supposed, my body increased in stature, and I trust that my mind did the same. I spent one of my vacations with an uncle, a widower, in the vicinity of London; the others were passed at Meadow-bank, and were not wholly unproductive of incident, though I am forced to brush by them in silence; only stating, that I renewed my acquaintance with the Moores, and that the con-

sequences of such renewal may very easily be anticipated. I became devoutly in love with Ella, and desperately in friendship with Michael.

But I must not leave school altogether without one more affectionate retrospect. I well remember the last evening that I spent within the walls of my school-room. It was the eve of our 'breaking-up' day for the Christmas vacation, and we were all—at least, as many as could get places,—assembled round a blazing fire, singing "*Dulce Domum*," at the top of our voices, with less harmony than feeling; for the words of the song came *home* to us all, though few of us were acquainted with the music. We had formed a semicircle of considerable extent, in front of the cheerful fire, and the middle seat was occupied by myself; for I was not only one of the senior, but one of the most popular, boys in the school, and I had a sort of acknowledged right, which none ever disputed, to this particular situation before the fire. Nor was this all;—there was an especial chair,—Dr. Goodenough's great *arm-chair*,—which I monopolised almost every winter-evening, and which was always called Doveton's seat, just as much as if it had been my own. I do not think that there is any more enviable condition than that of a senior boy in a large private school, where good feeling prevails universally; where love, and not fear, is the stimulant of action, and all the more lowly look up to him with

filial affection and respect. I think that this was once my condition, for I was always a friend to the weak.

Upon the particular evening to which I refer, we had extended our semicircle more than usual, for the season was bitterly inclement; and, moreover, we were desirous that the *Dulce Domum* should be chaunted in full chorus. I was ignorant that this was doomed to be my last evening at school, but, nevertheless, I felt certain—it must be confessed *unseasonable*—sensations of melancholy. There is always something in the thought of parting, even from those I do not much love, which weighs heavily upon my spirits. But here I was about to part from many whom I regarded with affection; and though I expected soon to rejoin them, I could not help feeling somewhat depressed. There was a little boy standing behind my chair,—a fair-faced, curly-headed little boy;—he was one of my protégés, and, seeing the little fellow, I took compassion upon him, and inviting him to come within the circle, I took him upon my lap, that he might fully enjoy, without incommoding my neighbours, the warmth of the cheerful fire. I do not know whether I am singular in this respect, but whenever I have done an act of condescension and kindness, my eyes become full of tears, and very little will cause them to overflow. I cannot account for this phenomenon, unless it is that they

are tears of pleasure; but so it was, that, upon this, as upon many other occasions, having placed this little boy upon my lap, and received his grateful acknowledgments, I felt that fulness of heart which makes the eye glisten with tears, and I struggled to suppress my emotions; but to no purpose; for happening to catch a few words of the *Dulce Domum*, which struck upon one of the most sensitive chords of my far too sensitive nature, unable any longer to restrain myself, I bowed my head, and wept outright.

There is something in this beautiful school-boy's ode, about being greeted by a mother's kisses: I remember the words, and hope that I never shall forget them; but as they are Latin, I will not intrude them in this place, for I am just now writing especially for mothers; and if there be any, in the small number of my readers, who have withheld these maternal kisses, I trust that they will ponder upon what I write.

I was one of the singers: among the loudest voices that were chaunting our school-boy anthem was mine; but when we came to the "mother's kisses," it faltered, and then was suddenly still. The little boy, who sate upon my knee, marked the cessation of my singing, and he also ceased to sing; for, looking into my face, he beheld the large tears rolling down my cheeks, and his young

heart sympathised with my sorrow, though he knew not the source whence it came. I felt the child's hand within my own, and the pressure of his soft cheek against mine, but I heeded him not; for I was thinking of the little love, and the no kisses, that would greet my return home on the morrow; and I thought of Smith's admonitions, and of how I had almost utterly disregarded them, and of the little progress I had made towards conciliating the affections, by humouring the prejudices, of my family: and thinking of these things, I was exceeding sad; but no one observed my sadness, save the little boy upon my knee.

I heard the child whispering in my ear, "Gerard!"—thus was it that he called me always, for he looked upon me as an elder brother;—Gerard, what makes you cry?"

I did not reply to this question, but quitting my seat, I took the little boy by the hand and led him to a dark corner of the school-room, where we sate down together on a form.

"Have you a mother, my little fellow?" said I.

"Yes, Gerard."

"And she loves you very dearly?"

"I think she does—indeed I'm sure she does, for I have no brothers and sisters."

"She will be very glad then to see you home

again, and may be she will smother you with kisses."

"That she will—but she never waits for my return, she always comes to fetch me herself."

"Happy boy!—and you love your mother?"

"Oh! yes, very much indeed, better than any one else in the world; and next to her I think I like you, for papa has been dead these five years."

"Never change, then—never change, my little fellow. Always love your mother best. There is no friend in the world like a mother—don't be laughed out of this belief. And, hark you, be very careful that you never say any thing unkind to her; for those are very bitter tears which a mother weeps, when the child of her heart proves an ingrate. But you are *quite* sure that she loves you very dearly."

"Oh! yes—I should be miserable if I were not."

"You would cry, perhaps."

"Yes, Gerard, very often."

"Then you can understand, my little fellow, what it was that made *me* cry a few minutes ago. I would not have told you, did I not think that, perhaps, you will value your mother's love all the more for knowing that there are some who yearn, in vain, after the blessings you so plentifully enjoy.

Bear this in mind, Alfred; and should you ever give way to unthankfulness, think of me and of what you have seen this evening, and thus learn to be grateful."

I went home; and I had not been there many hours, before I became certified of a fact that made no little impression on my mind. It was this—that I was a stumbling-block in the way of my younger brother's advancement. I do not think that Arthur himself regarded me in this light, but that my mother did, I saw plainly enough, and seeing it, I thought of Rebecca and of Jacob, the supplanter, and I felt an excess of anguish that was indeed difficult to bear.

Then I took out Smith's first letter, for though I had subsequently received many from my friend, there were none of equal value with this, and I read what he had written concerning the "mis-directions of certain amiable qualities," and I said to myself, "Assuredly I see here the mis-directions of maternal solicitude;" but I was nevertheless, determined still to 'bear up and steer right onward,' and with this determination, I went forth, full of hope, to visit the Moores.

But I had not proceeded far, before a sudden thought entered my brain, and caused me to turn back. In a moment I had formed a resolution, which I was bent upon immediately accomplish-

ing, and for this purpose, I went straight to my mother and said, "Mother, I have something to say to you."

She was alone and she seemed willing to listen. — "Say on then, Gerard," returned my mother.

"Is it not Arthur's desire," I asked "to go to some public school? And has he not set his heart more particularly upon going to Eton?"

"He certainly has," replied my mother, wondering what was the drift of such an interrogatory.

"You must excuse my questioning you in this manner—but let me further ask, whether your wishes are in accordance with dear Arthur's?"

"Why it is rather strange, to be sure, that you should take it upon yourself to question *me*—but you were always an odd boy—and as I am rather curious to know what you are driving at, I will answer you that I sympathize with his wishes, mainly *because they are his*. I have rather a horror of public schools, but I would willingly sacrifice my own feelings, if I thought that would gratify your brother's."

"And you are only withheld from doing so by a consideration of the heavy expense?"

"Why yes, Gerard, what with *your* schooling, and the girls' dress, and Walter's little allowance,

I find that I have not much to lay by, at the end of the year, for Arthur."

"My schooling must be a heavy expense."

"Yes, very heavy—at least seventy pounds a-year, besides your clothes, and your pocket-money."

"And perhaps about double that amount might keep Arthur at Eton?"

"About."

"Then, mother," said I, "I have a proposition to make, which, I dare say, will accord with your views. Take me away from school, and devote the money thus saved to Arthur."

"I suppose that you would like this well enough."

"No, mother, I cannot exactly say that. I am very happy at school. I have many friends there, and the masters are very kind to me, and I have no desire to change. You wrong me, indeed, if you think I am putting in *one* word for Arthur, and *two* for my own self."

"Very well, Gerard—but I have made this proposal, already, and your father won't listen to a word of it."

"But perhaps he will, if I urge it myself—I am now, you know, more than sixteen, and I am the head boy at Doctor Goodenough's, though there are many older than myself. The doctor

says, that if I am not intended for one of the Universities, I know quite enough Latin and Greek. I will tell my father this, and promise him faithfully that I will not be idle at home. He has many books, in the library, that it will do me much good to read—and, mother, if he does consent, as I am almost certain he will, don't you think that I might prepare Arthur for Eton? They say that the best masters are those who are only a few lessons before their pupils."

"Do, Gerard, there's a good boy.—Come nearer to me," and she took me by the hand, and looked into my face as I stood before her.—"Now, I see how much you are improved.—How tall you are!—and what a high forehead!—and your hair seems to curl naturally. You always look much stouter when first you come from school,—perhaps the air agrees with you better; it is more bracing—there is something, I think, very relaxing in this climate. Let me see your eyes—don't hang down your head—why bless me, they are swimming with tears; what a strange boy it is, to be sure!—I think that your eyes are very handsome—indeed, they are much like my own; there, wipe them, I have said nothing unkind to you—I don't know why you should weep."

My heart was too full to answer, "It is your kindness that makes me weep."

"Well then," continued my mother, "you

will tell your father all this about being head boy, and Doctor Goodenough, and the Universities. You are very considerate—now just stoop a little, you are so *very* tall, and I wish to kiss you.”

Oh! how those ‘mothers’ kisses,’ thrilled through my whole frame!

I went to my father, and he granted my request. I was no longer a school-boy.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LOVING HEART AND THE RESTLESS SPIRIT.

“ Oh ! none but gods have power their love to hide,
Affection by the countenance is descried ;
The light of hidden fire itself discovers,
And love, that is concealed, betrays poor lovers.”

MARLOWE.

HAVING acquainted my mother with the success of my embassy, and received her grateful acknowledgments, I set out again for the cottage of the Moores, and I had soon passed their humble threshold.

It was the month of December. Before a bright wood fire sate the Widow Moore, working with her needle, and on one side sate Ella in like manner

employed ; on the other Michael, reading aloud to them. When I entered they all three rose together, but Ella was the first to greet me. " We were expecting you," she cried in a gladsome voice, at the same time springing forward to welcome me.

But she checked herself before she had reached me, and stood still as though she were abashed at her own boldness, whilst I advanced towards her and took her by the hand, and, unable to restrain my impulses, I kissed her delicate cheek and pressed her to my panting bosom.

" Ella, dear Ella ! how glad I am to see you ; and Michael too—studious as ever—and Mrs. Moore, how well you are looking. Why, Ella, you are grown quite a woman, and you are prettier every time I see you. What book is that Michael ? ah ! poetry ?—and Spenser too, as I live."

" A present from Sir Reginald," said the Widow Moore.

" Sir Reginald, eh ? Sir Reginald ? Is Sir Willoughby dead then, Mrs. Moore ?"

" Alas ! poor gentleman ! he has gone to his account ; he died about four months ago."

" We must all die,—but where's Larry ?"

" He is out with Sir Reginald, rabbiting," replied Ella, " poor creatures ! I wish, Mr. Doveton, that you could persuade Larry to abandon these pursuits. He won't believe me, Sir, when *I* say

that they are cruel, but perhaps he will believe you."

"And *I* wish, Ella—that you wouldn't call me 'Sir,' I do not like it, I do not indeed. I call you *Ella* and you call me *Sir*."

"What then shall I call you?" asked Ella.

"*Gerard*—and why not? Now, don't shake your ringlets in that manner, but call me *Gerard* at once. You would not have me call you *Madam*, I'm sure; but I *will*, if you call me *Sir*."

But here Mrs. Moore interposed "We are poor people, Mr. Doveton, humble cottagers, and *you* are a gentleman. You have been very kind to us, and have condescended to visit us and to make companions of my children; but I hope that they will never forget themselves so far as to think themselves your equals. The children of a poor soldier's widow are no mates, Mr. Doveton, for you."

I did not much like this speech, so I made no answer to it, but changing the subject, I said, "Do you know, Ella, that I go no more to school?"

"Oh! how glad I am!" cried Ella, her eyes kindling with joy as she spoke.

"And *why* are you glad, Ella?" I asked; but the young maiden made no answer; her silence was a sufficient reply.

I looked at Ella; there was a blush upon her cheek. Michael saw it too, and he answered for

his sister, "Because we shall see more of you, Mr. Doveton."

"You are very kind, Michael, and this reminds me that I wish to have you for my master. Yes, *you*, Michael; for although I have been to school, I am nevertheless exceedingly ignorant, and I always feel this most acutely when I am talking to you. I know nothing—nothing whatever but a parcel of Greek and Latin *words*. I do not know one star from another, and I am utterly ignorant of all the commonest laws which regulate the goings on of the creation. You shall teach me, for you are a priest of nature, and I desire to be one of your pupils."

"You flatter me, Mr. Doveton," returned Michael, "for indeed I know scarcely anything at all."

"Oh! yes, you do—you have been learning all your life, and now you are fit to teach. We never begin to learn until we escape from school; but my time has come at last, and I trust that I shall soon acquire some better knowledge than that of Greek metres and Latin Syntax—the petty learning of the schools. I am going to read now for *ideas* and to explore the *penetralia* of nature."

"Mr. Doveton," said the Widow Moore, "have you ever read the *Colloquies* of Erasmus?"

I thought this a strange question to come from such a quarter; and I briefly responded "Never."

“ I asked you,” continued Mrs. Moore, “ because I have a copy of the book. I don’t know at all how I came by it, for it is in Latin—a little, old book—printed at Amsterdam. It is never likely to be any use to us ; but it is very much at your service, Mr. Doveton, if you will have the goodness to accept it,”—and Mrs. Moore left the room, and presently returned with the volume.

“ I will keep it in remembrance of you and your family,” said I, “ for, some day, and that ere long, I may leave you perhaps never to return.”

“ Oh ! don’t say that, Mr. Doveton,” cried Ella, and her eyes glistened with tears.

I sate down before their little fire, and I tarried there some time, partaking and communicating happiness. At length, I rose to depart, and Ella accompanied me to the outer door. She held something in her hand ; it was a little white lamb’s-wool scarf, which she had knitted with her own fingers, and now she presented it to me, saying, “ It is a poor offering, Mr. Doveton, but I hope that you will accept it, and *wear* it sometimes, I am almost afraid to say, *for my sake*. But you know spoilt children will presume ; and it is your kindness that has made me so daring.”

“ Bless you, Ella ! God bless you, dear Ella !—and you made this on purpose for me ? How kind of you ; I will always wear it when I go out ; and the first time, Ella, you know, it must be tied on

by your own little hands. There now, will you put it on for me ?” and I inclined my head downwards, that she might do so.

My lips were so near her forehead, that I could not resist the temptation of a kiss.

“Don’t frown, Ella,—don’t look angry, for I could not help it,—I could not indeed. It is all your own fault, Ella, for being so very pretty.”

“Mr. Doveton——”

“Oh ! don’t call me *Mr. Doveton*,—call me *Gerard*, now just once,—do Ella, there’s a dear good girl,—I know not when I have been in such spirits as now, but I shall be still happier if you will call me *Gerard*.”

“*Gerard*.”

“Thank you, Ella,—now, good b’ye. I shall see you again to-morrow.”

“Good b’ye, Gerard.”

And full of joy I went bounding along the garden, and seeing that the gate was closed, I vaulted over it and ran up the hill, which lay in the direction of Meadow-bank.

I had not proceeded far, before I heard a voice singing some snatches of a well-known song,—

“For ’tis my delight, on a shining night,
In the season of the year—
On a shining night, tis my delight” —

And so on, ringing all the changes upon these two

lines, that they would admit of, over and over again, and never advancing any further.

It was Lawrence Moore. He was coming down the hill, with a gun over his right shoulder, and a couple of rabbits in his left hand. He had almost arrived at the stature of manhood, and he was certainly a very handsome-looking youth, though he lacked much of the grace and elegance that was so apparent in Michael and Ella. He was now nearly seventeen years of age, and though he was little taller than myself, he was of a much more vigorous frame, and of a much more manly aspect. There was nothing in his appearance, or indeed in his manners, that was above his actual condition, but he was doubtless a very fine specimen of the class to which he belonged.

He was quite over-joyed to see me; and, turning back, he walked with me up the hill. When our first salutations were over, he intreated me to accept the rabbits that he held in his hand. "For although," said he, "you did hear me sing that song about the poacher, I came by these fellows fair enough. Sir Reginald gave them to me himself, for I shot them with three other couple besides. Do you ever shoot, Mr. Doveton?"

We walked on, Larry retracing his steps, and conversed on divers subjects, connected more particularly with ourselves. Larry insisted on walking the whole way home with me, that he might

carry the rabbits, which he had prevailed on me to accept. As we went, I well remember that he asked me if I had not spent my last holidays in the metropolis, or in its immediate neighbourhood.—“And what sort of a place,” said Larry, “is this great city of London, after all?”

“It is a place,” said I, “that no man in his senses would live in, of his own free will.”

“And that’s just what Sir Reginald says,” returned Larry; “but for all that, I should like to have a look at it.”

“And having looked at it, I’ll answer for it, Larry, that you soon will wish yourself at Grass-hill again.”

“I don’t quite think so,” said Larry; “I have lived at Grass-hill all my life. I am tired of it. I have some very good freinds here, but I want to see more of the world. I am quite sick of this out of the way place; besides, in such a small neighbourhood one is known by every body in it, and I don’t like that—for people are spiteful,—they watch one, and if one is’nt a saint, one gets the character of a devil.”

“Ah! Lawrence,” said I, in a somewhat reproachful voice, “you are tired of your own happy home.”

“No, Mr. Doveton, not that exactly; but I want to see a little beyond it.—And you don’t think that I shall like London? Well, to be sure, I’m

not much likely to try it,—but tell me, Sir, are the play-houses there such very fine places, as they say they be?

I replied to this question, which was followed by a series of other interrogatories, all relating to the one subject, which seemed to engross Larry Moore's mind—the great metropolis, London. My answers were, for the most part, but little commendatory. Larry, however, scarcely seemed to believe me, and every now and then a sceptical smile betrayed the little faith that he placed in my representations. I thought that he was much altered, and that the alteration was much for the worse. He did not speak so affectionately, as he was once wont to do, of his mother, or Michael and Ella. A spirit of discontent, and sometimes even of bitterness, pervaded all that he said. It was evident that he was very restless and unsatisfied with his condition. Strange desires seemed to have entered into his heart, and—*he was no longer a boy.*

But all these unfavourable manifestations were rendered less repulsive by a certain under-current of melancholy, which seemed to permeate all his reflections. I could not account for this appearance. It was strange that such a blithe spirit as Larry Moore's should have any intercourse with sorrow.

We parted by the garden-gate, beside my

father's house. It was then almost dark, for it was mid-winter, and when I entered there were lights in the dining-room, in preparation for our principal meal. That night, after I had retired to my chamber, I turned over the pages of the book, with which Mrs. Moore had presented me. I have said that it was a copy of the *Erasmi Colloquia*, a book containing much wisdom. The first dialogue I read,—I well remember which it was, though for certain reasons I will not here allude to it,—made a great, and I trust that hereafter I shall be able to add, a *permanent* impression upon my mind. I was much delighted with the contents of the book, and read far into the night. At length my eye-lids felt heavy, and resolving to put the volume aside, I turned over its leaves, hastily glancing at their contents, that I might see what promise of amusement they held out for the following day. In about the centre of the book there were two leaves fastened together, as it appeared to me by a waifer;—I separated them, and excessive was my astonishment at finding a fifty pound bank-note nestling snugly between the pages.

As soon as the first extremity of my surprise had subsided, I lodged the note in my writing-desk, and proceeded to inspect the book, thinking that perhaps I might find some clue whereby to unravel this strange mystery. There was no *name* in the

volume, but there was an engraving of a coat-of-arms pasted inside the cover, with an old Saxon motto, and the initials E. A. "And this is all," said I;—"but what does it matter? If there be one weakness more pitiful than another, it is curiosity. I have nothing to do with this;—Mrs. Moore is fifty pounds richer than she was in the morning, and I—I am none the poorer." And thus soliloquizing, I laid my head upon the pillow, and was soon in a profound sleep.

Did I dream? Yes: I dreamed that Mrs. Moore was a queen, and Ella a princess, and that I was a great general, and Ella's affianced husband. "Dreams," quoth old Owen Feltham, "are notable means of discovering our own inclinations."—How very often have I dreamed that Ella Moore was my wife!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BEREAVEMENT.

“ Where art thou, my beloved son?—
Where art thou, worse to me than dead?
Oh! find me prosperous, or undone!
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same,
That I may rest, and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend my name?”

WORDSWORTH.

On the following morning, as soon as it was light, I started for the Widow Moore's cottage, to acquaint her with the extraordinary discovery I had made, and to put her in possession of the results of that discovery. There had been a heavy fall of snow in the night, and the aspect of the country was desolate and cheerless. I think that there is very little in winter to compensate for the absence

of summer. Ice and snow are but poor substitutes for running brooks and green fields; and a sea-coal-fire plays but a sorry part as vice-regent of the sun.

I had no sooner passed the threshold of the cottage, than I became conscious that some heavy calamity had lately befallen its inmates; for there was "weeping and gnashing of teeth," and all things appeared to be in confusion. Michael met me at the door, and his voice faltered as he said to me, "For God's sake, Mr. Doveton, come in here, or my poor mother will die!"

I entered the room.—There sate Mrs. Moore in her old arm-chair,—not, as she was wont to sit, erectly, but in a position which might have made one think that she had fallen there in a fit. She was leaning backwards, with upturned face and clenched hands, utterly motionless. Her cap had fallen off, and her long grey hair fell in masses over her shoulders. It was altogether a heart-rending sight. Ella sate upon the ground, at her mother's feet, her face hidden in the lap, and her beautiful yellow hair veiling the knees, of the old woman. I had never before seen such a picture of desolation, and a great fear took possession of my young heart.

I knew not what to do. I heard Ella sobbing, but I thought that her mother was dead. The old woman gave no sign of life. She did not move,

nor did she utter a sound. My heart stood still; as I approached the spot where the widow-woman sat, statue-like, with her daughter clinging to her knees.

I stood beside her chair, and I saw her move. Her whole frame seemed to be wrenched with an agony, and the poor creature groaned aloud. I never saw such a hopeless expression as there was upon her face at that moment. There was not a tear in her eyes, but the orbs seemed to be unnaturally distended, and they wore that glazed, arid appearance which telleth the history of a sorrow "too deep for tears."

I saw her lips move, and I heard her mutter "My son!—my Lawrence!—and why have you left me?—Gone, gone! and perhaps for ever!—My poor boy!—my own, and my only one!" and then she closed her eyes, and her lips were still; and I thought that she had lapsed into insensibility.

In the meantime, Michael had seated himself on the ground beside Ella, and taking one of her hands into his own, he was endeavouring, as I thought, to strengthen his sister, by making her feel the presence of his help in this hour of tribulation. And, indeed, when trouble comes upon us, there is exceeding comfort in knowing that we are not alone in the world.

Michael nestled beside his sister, but Ella did

not lift up her head. They all seemed paralyzed with sorrow; and I—quite a boy as I was—scarcely knew how to act in this extremity. A vague conjecture entered into my mind, that something horrible had befallen Lawrence, for he was absent; and the few scattered words which I had caught from his mother's murmurings, seemed to allude darkly to him, and I thought that the boy was dead.

At length, I found words to articulate "Michael, in God's name, tell me the meaning of this!"

I had no sooner uttered this sentence, than Ella started up from her lowly posture, and shaking back her disordered hair, she turned her face towards me, and, in hurried accents, exclaimed, "It is he—I knew it—I knew that it was Gerard's voice."

The young maiden seemed to have gained a sudden access of strength. My presence inspired her with fresh energies. She no longer abandoned herself to the indolence of despair, but she felt full of hope and courage, and strong to act, whilst I was beside her. This gentle, yielding creature, of fifteen, who but a moment before had cowered at the feet of her mother, utterly given up to fear and sorrow, and sobbing with all the weakness of a child, now stood beside me, with undimmed eyes and calm aspect, firm, resolute, and ready to act.

And I had wrought this change upon her; for she put her faith in me—and *she loved me*.

Ella clung to me, but not as one that was helpless, but as one that was ready to co-operate with me.—“*I will tell you, Gerard,*” thus was it that she replied in a calm clear voice to the question that I had put to Michael: “I will tell you what is the meaning of all this. Lawrence has fled from us—I know not why, but he has gone, and I fear, not to return. He stole out last night after we had all gone to rest, and whither he has gone, none of us can determine.”

“Be sure, Ella,” said I, “that he will come back again,”—but my heart misgave me sadly; for I thought of what he had said to me on the preceding evening, and I felt not the assurance that I pronounced.

“No, Gerard, that hope is vain,” returned Ella, “he has gone for ever, not for a day, or a week—he has taken his clothes with him, and all the little money he possessed. Nor is this all,—that note, Gerard, tells us too plainly what we are to expect,”—and Ella Moore pointed to an open letter, which lay at her mother’s feet on the ground.

I took up the note and I read — “Mother dear, good bye. I am off to seek my fortune; I hardly know where myself, nor can I tell you for fear that you should attempt to bring me back

again, which I do not wish—but wherever I am, be sure that I am safe. Perhaps I may rise, perhaps I may fall, but anything is better than never changing. Forget that I was ever born. You have Michael and Ella still,—they are better in every way than I am. Good bye, dear mother. It is no use trying to find me. Before you wake, I shall be many miles away from you. Good bye, Ella, good bye Michael, and be very kind to your mother.”——This letter was indeed convincing ; and Lawrence Moore had left his little homestead to seek his fortune in strange places.

“ You are right, Ella,” said I, “ it is all too true ; he has gone. But what can we do for your mother?—poor soul, it has been a sad blow to her ! ”

“ Oh ! Gerard, I can do any thing now—any thing, indeed I can—shall I speak to her ? Michael, dear Michael, but where are you going, my brother ? ”

“ I am going for a doctor, Ella ;—don’t you think that it is wisest, Mr. Doveton ; I could not go before you came, but *now*, ”—and in a moment, I saw him running bare-headed through the snow.

Ella drew more closely to my side, and looked up into my face so fondly, that for a moment I utterly forgot every other object in the world beside *her*. She seemed to place such entire confidence in my superior wisdom, that seeing me near her, she almost ceased to fear for the safety

of her poor mother. If a god had come to her assistance, she could not have felt more secure than she did at this moment, in my presence; whilst I, conscious of my impotence, was in a most painful state of perplexity, for I had not the least knowledge of what course it behoved me to follow.

All this time—and yet it was not long, for that which takes hours to describe, may be done in a few minutes—all this time, Mrs. Moore was leaning back in her chair, with her eyes closed, and her hands clenched, motionless as though she were a corpse. Ella looked at me, and I looked at Mrs. Moore, but we neither of us knew how to act.

But presently, not liking to be quite inactive, I went up to the afflicted widow-woman, and taking one of her clenched hands, I said, “Mrs. Moore, are you better?”

She opened her eyes, saying sharply, “Who speaks to me?” like one, whom a harsh voice wakens out of a pleasant dream; and Ella replied, “It is Gerard—Mr. Doveton—dear mother.”

The poor woman looked at me, and said, “Mr. Doveton, have you brought back my boy? They have taken him from me, they have taken my Lawrence—what shall I do without him? How can I live?—Is there no way to find him, Mr. Doveton?—Yes, there is,” and she pointed

towards the window.—“ Yes, there is, for the snow has fallen, and we might *track* him ; I think, Mr. Doveton, that I should know his foot-marks among a thousand.”—And she would have arisen from her seat, but I withheld, saying, “ It is vain.”

“ And why is it vain ? Oh ! you know not, Mr. Doveton, what strange powers of vision a mother has to track the foot-prints of her son.”—But seeing that I still shook my head, and that the tears streamed down my face, she repeated—“ But why is it vain ? you would not mock me, I’m sure.”

“ Alas ! ” I answered, “ because Larry departed before the snow fell, Mrs. Moore.”

“ And how do you know this, Mr. Doveton ? Perhaps you saw him depart—oh ! why did you not stop him.”

“ Indeed,” said I, “ I saw him not depart,—but mine were the first footsteps, which broke the surface of the snow.”

“ Then, there is no hope—none whatever, and I am left childless in the world.”

“ Childless ? ”

“ Yes, if I remember aright, there is something about it in the scripture.—‘ He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.’ Is it not thus ? ”—and she appeared to wander again. The extremity of her affliction had made her wild.

“ Mrs. Moore,” said I, “ you forget altogether.

Are there not Michael and Ella remaining to you, and will they not be to you a very present help in this hour of trouble?"

"Ah! Michael and Ella, say you?—why yes,"—and the afflicted woman appeared suddenly to recollect herself,—“to be sure there is Michael and there is Ella,—but you know, that the lost one was my first-born, and, indeed, until this hour, I knew not how dearly I loved him. This is indeed a heavy visitation, Mr. Doveton, and, I may say, that it has almost killed me. But tell me, have I been raving much—have I said any strange things?"

"I have heard you say nothing," I replied, "unless it was to call upon your son."

"Well, and you were quite sure that there were no foot-prints in the snow."

"Quite,—both the lane and the garden, when I came hither, showed one untrodden surface of snow."

"And where do you think that he has gone?"

"To London."

"To London!" exclaimed Ella, now breaking in for the first time upon our dialogue—"and may we not follow him thither—Michael and I? why should we not set out to redeem our lost brother?"

"Alas! Ella," I replied, "you know not what a place this London is;—you have never seen its

thousand streets, its teeming thoroughfares, its obscure haunts, its million of inhabitants. It is a worse than Babylonish capital. We might explore it for many years and gain no tidings of the lost one."

"True," said the Widow Moore, "too true—you have been to London. But spite of this, *something must be done*. I am calmer now, Mr. Doveton, and I can reason with you;—sit down beside me and let us talk over this matter. You once saved the life of my son by your courage, perhaps you may do so again by your wisdom."

The wisdom of one, who has numbered scarce seventeen years is not much; but Ella seemed to think otherwise, for, seconding her mother's request with an earnest voice, and looking beseechingly into my face, she said to me, "Oh! yes, you are much wiser than we are; so tell my mother what to do,—sit down as she asks you, and advise her."

Had I offered any advice at that moment, it would certainly have been — *to submit*. Firstly, because I could not see that there was the smallest chance in the world, of our being able to trace the fugitive; and secondly, because I did not sympathize very deeply in the emotions of the bereaved mother. Had she lost either Ella or Michael, I should have felt much more keenly for her situation; but, as it was, though I pitied her distress, I did not much grieve for the cause

of it. Lawrence Moore, by thus deserting his kindred, had proved himself unworthy of their love.

Such is a stern view of the case ; and a mother looks with milder eyes on the offences of a beloved son. Indeed Mrs. Moore never uttered one single accent of reproach. In the agony of her bereavement, she overlooked the unkindness of him who had deserted her. She thought not at that moment of the cruel wrong she had sustained at his hands—she thought not of his ingratitude, of his hardheartedness—of the utter want of feeling he had manifested in thus quitting his home without the parting embraces of his family. Though the arrow rankled in her heart, she waxed not angry with him who had discharged it. Oh ! indeed a mother's love, like charity, "endureth all things."

Despair is not always idle—we often continue to act long after we have ceased to hope ; and Mrs. Moore, though her heart misgave her that all attempts at tracing her son would be fruitless, still determined to seek him. In this extremity she suggested many expedients, each succeeding one more vain than its forerunner, until, in the utter absence of all reasonable hopes, she became quite childish in her suggestions. To write to London, to put an advertisement in the newspaper, to placard hand-bills, to offer a reward, to apply

to the magistrate for a warrant, to charge him with some offence, to go to the commanding officer of the district, thinking that Larry might have enlisted for a soldier—to search all the neighbouring seaport towns, with the chance that he might have turned sailor—all these schemes were devised one after another, and abandoned as quickly as they were devised.

At length Mrs. Moore asked me if I had heard any thing of a company of strolling players, who had lately visited the neighbourhood. “For,” said she, “I have heard Larry speak of them, and he has visited them in Merry-vale, more than once. Perhaps,—yet how idle are all these fancies,—he may have joined the company of actors.”

“They were horsemanship people,” said Ella.

“Then, be sure that he has joined them,” cried the Widow Moore, “for great was his love of horses.”

Knowing, as I did, the vagrant propensities of the lost one—his love of liberty, and his delight in horsemanship, I did not think it by any means improbable that he had joined the company of equestrians. There is something free, jovial, and reckless, in the life of a strolling player; and I thought that to a mind, like Larry Moore’s, not over-burthened with refinement, hating nothing so much as restraint, and loving nothing so well as excitement, such a life must be peculiarly at-

tractive. Moreover, he had confessed the predilection; and there was another circumstance, only known to myself, which served to strengthen the opinion I had formed.

Ella read my feelings in the expression of my countenance. "Ah!" she said, "you think with me, that he has joined the company of players."

"Then we shall find him," cried the Widow Moore—"we shall find him,"—and a ray of hope illuminated her pale face with a sudden expression of joy.—"But, Mr. Doveton, do you know aught about them? Tell me—quick—speak, I beseech you."

"They left Merry-vale yesterday," said I,—
"I saw them preparing to depart."

"Then as surely as there is a God in heaven," cried the widow woman, with impassioned earnestness, "my son has joined the company of strollers."

This hope, which in Mrs. Moore's mind was almost tantamount to an entire conviction, generated a more serene state of feeling; and the poor woman's conversation now exhibited all that strong sense, for which it was so remarkable. We now consulted together, with entire calmness, as to the best course to be adopted towards the recovery of her lost son. Ella listening all the while, with breathless attention, to the words which proceeded from her mouth.

We had not communed long, before suddenly interrupting Mrs. Moore, I exclaimed, "I will go forth myself, and seek him among the players."

"Oh! kind, good, generous!" exclaimed Ella, starting suddenly up from the low stool on which she had been sitting,—“Oh! mother, what should we do without Gerard?—Has he not been a father to us all?”

"Mr. Doveton," said the Widow Moore, her voice tremulous with emotion,—“the child, indeed, has spoken the truth; you *have* been a father to us all—But yet, Sir, you cannot seek my boy; for you know not whither the players have taken him.”

"But I can learn—Hark you, Mrs. Moore, I will run with all speed to Merry-vale, and there I shall soon learn the course that the players have taken. Then I will hire a horse and follow them. I am off—Good b'ye, Ella dear, God bless you till we meet again.”

"Stay, Gerard; you go not yet," cried Ella, laying her hand upon my shoulder—"you must not go forth hungry, or you will faint by the wayside. Humble is our fare, Gerard—but we have milk and bread in abundance. You have not yet broken your fast—you must want food—now sit down by the fire, Gerard, and I will boil you a basin of milk. You will not—oh! proud, proud—" and Ella's blue eyes glistened with tears, which she in vain struggled to suppress.

“ I am not proud, Ella,” I replied, taking the young maiden by the hand, “ but time presses ; I must not loiter, or I shall be too late to bring back your brother. You know that I have often eaten bread and drank milk, that you have given me, Ella.”

“ And is that all,” exclaimed Ella, a smile breaking through her tears—“ oh ! then you must wait ; for no time was ever yet gained by starting weak and exhausted upon a journey.”

“ There is wisdom in what Ella says,” interposed Mrs. Moore ; and hearing this, Ella looked triumphantly into my face, and taking my hat out of my hand, she went to a cup-board, and produced her little offering, and the milk was soon seething upon the fire.

Whilst Ella was preparing my repast, Mrs. Moore and I continued to converse together. The first gloss, as it were, of the new-born hope, which so lately had entered her mind, with a strength in proportion to its suddenness, seemed now to have passed away ; and she began to consider the course to be adopted, in the event of this solitary hope proving itself to be a vain delusion. To some plan or other that I suggested, Mrs. Moore replied, “ that it was good, but that the adoption of it would require the outlay of more money than she possessed in the world.”

‘ Upon this hint, I spake.’—I had come to the

cottage for the express purpose of putting Mrs. Moore in possession of the fifty pounds, that I had found in her book ; but the sad scene, that I had witnessed, had caused me to forget the prime object of my visit. Now, however, it flashed across my mind, and I thought that this would be a good opportunity of acquainting the widow with my discovery.

So I said, producing the money as I spoke, " Mrs. Moore, you are richer than you imagine yourself, by no less a sum than fifty pounds."

Ella suspended her operations, and looked up wonderingly into my face, whilst Mrs. Moore said, " Richer by what, Sir? I am poorer than I was *by a son.*"

I put the note into the widow-woman's hand, and I said, " This is yours, Mrs. Moore—I found it in the Erasmus that you gave me."

The poor woman started in her seat, and with a sort of convulsive movement grasped the arms of her chair with either hand, whilst she uttered in a choaking voice, the one word " Nonsense," and the note fell crumpled to the ground.

But Ella was otherwise moved ; she looked at me with an expression of fondness, and said, " Now, indeed, I know, Gerard, that this is only your delicate manner of presenting us with the money. You wish to give—I see through it all—and not be known as the giver."

“Nay, Ella, as I live, this money was never mine—I never possessed so large a sum in my life. I found it in your mother’s book, and now it is legitimately hers.”

Mrs. Moore, who had by this time recovered her serenity—or, in a great measure, subdued her emotions, now said to me—“It is a strange business, truly, and I scarcely know how to account for it—Indeed, I do not very well know how the book came into my possession—I think it probable that the note had been placed there as a mark by some absent-minded individual—some wool-gathering student or other, and forgotten. I have known a case very much resembling the present one, where the sum was considerably larger, and the discovery made at an auction. It is certainly a strange circumstance; but I ought to be thankful, nevertheless, and hail the money as a present from God”—and thus endeavouring to explain away this mystery, after as common-place a fashion as possible, she folded up the long-hidden note, and deposited it in an old writing-desk.

She had no sooner resumed her seat than Michael entered the room, accompanied by the apothecary. Both were astonished and indeed delighted—for the man of medicine was indeed a good Samaritan, and he rejoiced in the recovery of the widow-woman, though he had lost a patient thereby. “Ah! Doctor,” said I, “for the sick at

heart there is no medicine so sovereign as *Hope.*'

"Hope," cried Michael, almost breathless with eagerness,—“hope—is there really hope?”

“Yes, Michael—yes, doctor,”—replied Ella, in hurried accents; for the tide of gratitude was strong within her, and no rapidity of utterance could keep pace with the rush of her feelings. “There is hope, and whence comes it, do you think?—Gerard is going forth himself in search of our poor brother. Michael, why don't you thank him?—You are silent, when you ought to be praising him.—Look at the snow there, it is ankle deep, yet *he* cares nothing about it. Oh! indeed, it is very kind. No one else would have done this for us—no one else is so generous as this.”

And having uttered these words, Ella turned her face towards the fire;—hers was the eloquence of genuine gratitude,—she could not restrain herself,—her heart was full to bursting, and in this uncontrolled flow of words the magnitude of her feelings had found a vent. Yet when she had done speaking she blushed, and trembled, and looked at me, and that look seemed to say plainly, “Have I spoken too freely in your presence? Oh! Gerard, forgive me if I have.”

She put into my hand a basin of milk, and then seated herself beside me. In the meantime the apothecary had been conversing with Mrs. Moore,

and from her he had learned my proposed plan of action. He approved of it. Michael offered to accompany me, but I desired him to remain at home with his mother. He saw the necessity of this, and at once complied with my request. "Twill be a time of anguish with us, until you return," said the Widow Moore.

I started up, and was preparing to depart on foot, when the apothecary offered me his horse to expedite my journey to Merry-vale.—"Take the beast, and leave him at the Globe," said he; "for there you may hire as good a hack as any to be found in the county."

"Thank you,—thank you, Doctor,—now God be with you all, and sustain your souls in serenity and hope."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE DIVER.

“ Are there not, Festus, are there not dear Michal,
Two points in the adventure of the diver ?
One when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge,
One when, a prince, he rises with the pearl—
Festus I plunge !”

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

I MOUNTED the Doctor's horse and rode off through the snow to Merry-vale. I proceeded straight to the Globe Inn, where I not only hired a hack, but learned the route of the players. They had taken the road to London. I followed them, not so rapidly as I could have wished, for the snow retarded my progress, but I was somewhat consoled for this delay by the reflection that a similar obstruction must have impeded the advance of the players.

I thought, as I went, that I could track them in the snow, for I imagined that I saw the hoof-prints of an equestrian cavalcade. Nor was I mistaken: before twelve o'clock, about ten miles distant from Merry-vale, I overtook the player-troop with their baggage.

There was a string of some six or seven mounted actors, with the same number of led horses. Perhaps their complete stud consisted of about a dozen showy steeds, the greater number of which were white, besides a couple of little dwarf ponies, and a tame Zebra,—the three latter animals trotting along very quietly by themselves. In addition to this troop of light horse, there was the baggage, rightly called by the Romans *impedimenta*, in the shape of a large yellow-painted van, with chimnies, and a door to the rearward—altogether a very cumbrous looking vehicle drawn by two poor, unseemly horses, who had spent the best days of their beauty and strength in the service of the sight-seeing public. The horsemen were for the most part as shabby-looking tatterdemalions as I had ever seen; and a few moments sufficed to assure me that Larry was not one of them. A set of strolling actors, *out of uniform*, cut a very sorry figure at all times; but these fellows looked particularly unsightly, for the weather being bitterly cold, some had thrown horse-cloths over their shoulders to keep them warm, some

blankets, or pieces of old drugget, whilst one had applied to that purpose a tawdry theatrical cloak, and another a fragment of a green curtain. Add to this their unwashed and unshaven faces, with the remains of some two-days'-old paint still clinging to their cheeks, emaciated by habitual dissipation,—their frost bitten red noses, and their black-bowled pipes protruding from their lips, and you will see before you a company of men, which scarcely a mother in Christendom would desire her first-born to join.

I accosted the last horseman of the cavalcade. —“My friend,” said I, “have the goodness to tell me whether there is one Moore in your company?”

The fellow thus addressed did not vouchsafe to turn round his head that he might answer me ; but instead of this he placed a hand upon the pommel of his saddle, and in a moment—by what dexterity of movement he accomplished this feat I cannot tell—he was sitting with his face towards the tail of his horse, and staring me very impudently in the face.

“La ! you there,” said the fellow ; and I knew at once by the singular contortions of face, accompanying his speech, that he was the clown,—“La ! you there, what have you done to my horse, Sir,—I see that you have stolen his head.”

I could not help laughing at this thread-bare

circus jest,—the gesticulations of the buffoon were so ridiculous ; but I presently repeated the question, “ Is there one Moore in your company, my good fellow ? ”

“ Give me back my horse’s head and I will tell you,” replied the mountebank, in a lachrymose voice, letting fall the corners of his mouth, and looking most ludicrously doleful.

“ Look behind you, and perhaps you will find it,” said I, thinking it most discreet to humour him.

“ La, here it is ! ” cried the clown, spinning himself round again, and resuming his proper position on the back of his docile quadruped ;—“ La, how queer ! ”

“ And now, sir, that you have found your horse’s head, perhaps you will deign to tell me whether there’s one Moore in your most august company ? ”

“ Why, yes ;—since *you* have joined us, there is *one more* in our company, surely,” returned the facetious mountebank, shaking his sides with laughter at the excellence of his own joke.

“ You are a wit, as well as a player,” said I ;—“ but, concerning this Mr. Moore ? ”

“ Look a-head,” replied the clown ;—“ can you tell him when you see him ? ”

“ He is not there, certainly,” said I ; “ the person whom I am in search of, is as good-looking a young fellow as you would wish to see, scarcely

seventeen, with dark brown curly hair, and hazel eyes; a fine open countenance, and rosy cheeks; tall, broad-shouldered, and remarkably well made."

"Altogether, I should think, by your description, sir, not very much unlike myself."

I smiled; and the mountebank continued.—
"Perhaps, young gentleman, I am that person. You have some good news, I imagine, to communicate, —a *next of kin*, or something in that line. You are a young lawyer, I take it, though you are almost comely enough for a player. It's a pity that, with your person, you should not take to the profession. But, as I was about to say, I'm thinking that I once had an uncle, whose name was—yes, it certainly *was*—Moore."

"I have every reason to suppose," said I, "that the individual, of whom I am in search, has joined your company of strollers."

"Men of property have done such things ere now," said the mounted buffoon, winking his eye very sagaciously, — "and have lain *incognito* from inclination;—and, in short, it is not to be supposed that I was altogether ignorant of my claims."

I now saw that the *soi-disant* clown was much more of the knave than of the fool; but as I had no reason for wishing to undeceive him, by declaring the real object of my mission, I suffered him to remain in his delusion, though I could not help

mortifying his hopes, lest he should think me one of the blindest fools that was ever employed upon a business of identification.

“ I hardly think, sir,” said I, “ that you are the individual in question; for my instructions say, dark-brown hair, and yours is red—excuse me—light auburn; hazel eyes,—yours, sir, are grey; rosy cheeks,—yours are very pale; tall,—sir, you are barely five feet two. Excuse me, my dear sir, but my instructions oblige me to be particular.”

“ To be sure, there is a little discrepancy,” replied the clown; “ but it is merely on the surface—*primo facio*, as you lawyers say.—You see, young gentleman, that I am a scholar. But the fact is, that my hair would be dark brown, but that I have none; I now wear a wig. My cheeks, young gentleman, are actually rosy, but they are covered over with that infernal French chalk. And as for my eyes, sir, they were once hazel, but now they are grey from old age.

“ By my faith! you are an ingenious gentleman,” thought I;—but I was weary of this foolery; so, hoping to cut it short, I said, “ My instructions inform me that the individual, of whom I am in search, is scarcely seventeen years of age, but, as I take it, that you, sir, are at least seven-and-thirty, or, by'r Lady, approaching two score, I scarcely think that you can be the person whom I have the honour to seek. Neither is he among the

gentlemen horsemen in advance of us ; and so you see my only chance remaining is, that he may be in the van."

" Stop a minute, young gentleman," replied the clown, " I am not quite so old as you imagine. In years I am still a boy, though much feeling and much thought have somewhat impaired the boyishness of my aspect. My life, though short, has been a chequered one ; and, as some great philosopher has observed, ' If time is to be measured by events, I have already outlived my time.' You see, young gentleman, that I have grown old unseasonably. Pardon me, sir, but my appearance belies me ; perhaps I may yet have the pleasure of reconciling my years with your instructions."

" I fear not, sir," said I ; " but perhaps, in the meantime, you will suffer me, with all humility, to pay my respects to the inmates of the van."

" You will find no Moore there," replied the player, somewhat surlily. " I tell you, young gentleman, you can't go in, for that's where we keep our ladies."

" I must."

" I tell you that you can't, young gentleman."

" But I must ; I have got a warrant."

" *Old birds — old birds*, young gentleman," cried the mountebank, looking exceedingly sagacious, and leaving me to fill up the remainder of the proverb.

"But," said I, thrusting my hand into my pocket, chinking the money that there was in it, and putting on my blindest aspect, "I have particular reasons for wishing to see this Mr. Moore."

"Can't come over me in that manner," replied the player.—"Honesty, conscience, integrity, and divers other considerations, forbid.—*Nolo episcopari*, as the scholars say,—which means, 'I am not to be bribed.' Besides, sir, you can't see what there isn't; and though I shall be glad enough to drink your health,"—and here he extended his hand, which was destined to grasp nothing more substantial than a stray snow-flake,—"I cannot let you in to the women—I cannot, upon my honour!"

"Then I will get in as I best can."

"Upon my honour, sir,—"

"Confound your honour!—I *will* get into the van."

And here our strife of words waxing loud, three or four of the van-guard horsemen now reined in their well-trained horses, and wheeled round, to learn the cause of the uproar. In a moment, I was surrounded by players of all degrees,—from the "riding master," who smacks the whip in the centre of the circus, to the "Juvenile Phænomenon," who stands on his head, rides three horses, and performs upon the slack-wire. There was the Austrian Hercules, born in St. Giles's; and the

celebrated American gymnotechnist, who had never crossed the Atlantic; and Monsieur le Chevalier Hippolyte, a thorough-going John Bull, and *le jeune Parisien*, and *le jeune Chinois*, the two sons of the manager; and all these came flocking round me, and asking what was the matter.

“Hollo, Poll Philpot!” cried Monsieur Hippolyte, with a right down English oath, such as no other country could produce, “what do you want with this young gentleman? You have not turned *tobyman**—eh?”

“I want nothing with the young gentleman,” replied Signor Paulo, in a lachrymose tone of voice—“’Tis the young gentleman that wants something with us.”

“What—what?” asked half-a-dozen voices.

“Why, *a next of kin*,” responded Paulo.

“That’s me!—that’s me!—that’s me!” cried the Austrian, and the American, and the Frenchman, and the Chinese, all in one common language.—“And I have lost an uncle!”—“And I have lost a father!”—“And I a grandmother!” shouted one after another.

Now, seeing so many strange vagabond fellows about me, I began to lose my presence of mind. For a boy, scarcely seventeen years old, who has seen very little of the world, to find himself in the

* Highwayman.

middle of a band of strolling players, with an assumed character oddly forced upon him, and a somewhat difficult object to accomplish, is not a very pleasant situation, and I began to feel rather uneasy; for the confidence which had supported me in the presence of one, began to evaporate in the presence of many. But I thought of Ella, and of what a fine thing it would be to return to her crowned with success, and the anticipation of her ebullient gratitude, and of the Widow Moore's rapturous thanksgivings, and of Michael's more subdued, but not less keenly felt, delight; and thinking of all these things, I resolved to accomplish my purpose without delay, or at once to fail in the attempt.

I threw as much manliness into my deportment, as I could, and speaking in a loud distinct voice, I said, "The truth is, gentlemen, that I have come in search of one Lawrence Moore, whose person is perfectly familiar to me, and to whose advantage I happen to know something, which I would impart to him as speedily as possible. Now if you would oblige me by drinking my health,"—and here I took out a handful of silver—"by drinking my health, gentlemen, and opening the door of your van, that I may just take a look in to see whether my friend is there, you will oblige me, gentlemen, very much indeed—very much indeed, gentlemen, will you oblige me."

“ Can’t,” said the Austrian Hercules, “ there’s my wife there.”

“ And my daughter,” said the Frenchman.

“ And Mr. Centaur, the manager,” exclaimed the American gymnotechnist—“ besides, can’t you take our word for it ; there’s only the women and the manager in the van. Can’t you believe the honour of a gentleman ?”

Just as the American ceased to speak, *le jeun Chinois* threw a snow-ball at my head—a movement upon the part of the enemy, which, far from cooling my ardour, imparted to it an additional glow, and I instantly flung myself off my horse and rushed towards the van, which was dragging its slow length along at the rate of about three miles an hour. I was not long before I had found my way into the interior of the cumbrous vehicle, though, just as I had made good my entrance, I felt some one pulling at my legs, and then I received a blow on the back, which sent me headforemost into the lap of the Austrian Dejanira. The women all shrieked, as women generally do upon such occasions ; whilst I, stammering out an apology for the indecorous manner of my introition, recovered myself with some difficulty, and sunk down in a sedentary posture, upon the floor of the caravan. Then, not without trepidation, I looked around me, and stared at the company into which I had thus precipitously intruded myself.

The interior of the caravan was divided into two compartments, the larger of which was to the rear—into this I had now thrust myself. On either side there was a stationary bench, or rather form, on which the women were sitting, some mending their tattered finery, and others doing nothing at all. These females were five in number, and for the most part, unclean and unhealthy looking creatures, though still bearing some traces of what ought to have been beauty. Every thing around them was in disorder; there were articles of wearing apparel, male and female, scattered about every where; there were bottles, and broken tobacco-pipes, and fragments of bread lying on the ground. There was a bag of oats in one corner of the apartment, a bundle of properties in another; hoops, covered with green baize for the ponies to jump through, were suspended on pegs around the wall, and from the roof hung a loose netting containing a miscellaneous assortment of articles, too numerous for an author to describe.

There was not one male animal in this compartment of the van—a circumstance which inspired me with courage. I looked at the women, and the women looked at me, and if there was confusion before my entrance, how much greater was the confusion now.—“Ladies,”—thus I began to address them—“pardon, I beseech you, the in-

decorous abruptness with which I have intruded myself into your presence," and having delivered myself of this exordium, I was much astonished at my own collectedness, and I began to think that I was safer in the caravan than out of it.

The women, too, soon began to collect themselves. "It is only a boy after all," said the wife of the Austrian Hercules,—“poor fellow! perhaps he is cold.”

“A handsome youth, too, on mine honour,” said another of the fair equestrians.—“He has come to join us I hope; he is just the figure for a Zephyr.”

“Oh! no,” said another voice, which, unlike the others, was low, soft-toned, and melancholy, —“he has not come to join us, I’m sure; for he is a young gentleman.”

This last speaker was a young girl about fourteen years of age,—a beautiful, dove-eyed little maiden, with long, sleek brown hair, and a clear transparent complexion, too delicate to indicate health. There was a touching look of sadness in her face, but little in harmony with her calling, and as she sate there in her innocence and modesty, surrounded by a number of bold, unblushing theatrical Amazons, she was like a prisoned dove in a cage of vultures, pining, trembling, longing to be free. It was this little girl, who enacted *la Sylphide*; and in truth she was like what she

personated ; for with her light, graceful, undulating figure, her rounded and taper limbs, her profusion of flowing hair, and her meek-eyed delicate face, it required but little art to array her in such drapery as might make her the perfect image of a Sylph, an Oread, or one of the Hamadryades.

“ He can’t be come to join *us*, for he is a gentleman,” said the little girl.

“ And why not a gentleman, child ?” asked the wife of the Austrian Hercules ; “ was not my husband a gentleman when he first came to join the company ?”

“ I don’t know,” replied la Sylphide, “ I was too young then to tell a gentleman.”

“ My pretty child,” said I, addressing myself to the last speaker, for I saw that from this quarter I was more likely to receive the answer that I wished than from any other, — “ my pretty child, will you have the goodness to tell me whether there is one named Moore in your company ?”

The girl was about to make answer, when a door was heard to open, and she checked herself, merely saying, “ Hush, here is Mr. Centaur.” I looked towards the upper end of the caravan, and I saw that the manager was standing at the door, which opened between his private compartment and the common hall, as it were, of the gang. “ And who have we got here ?” cried Mr. Centaur, in a voice of exceeding fierceness.

The manager had heard the commotion outside, and the women's shriek inside the van; he had felt the vehicle likewise stand still, and to say the truth, he was more alarmed than he was astonished at these circumstances; for strolling players are not more particular in paying their bills, than are other birds of passage, when they emigrate. In short he anticipated an arrest; and as he happened to be dressing at the time, he was in no hurry to make his appearance. His wife, who was likewise in *deshabille*, for this worthy couple were making preparations to cut their best figure at the little town they were approaching, now suggested the propriety of taking a precautionary peep through the keyhole, which Mr. Centaur having done, the burthen of his fears was lightened, for instead of a grim-visaged bailiff he beheld only a fair-faced boy. But terror having departed, gave place to wrath in the manager's bosom; and indignant at being thus disturbed by a stripling, he immediately threw open the door, forgetting that he was only half-dressed, and that one side of his face was thickly covered over with shaving-lather, and cried, "Who have we here?" in tones of no common irascibility.

I gave no answer to this question, but made my way up to the indignant manager, bustling through the herd of women, who all pinched me as I passed, with the exception of the little, mild-

eyed maiden, who whispered softly into my ear,—
“Take care ! he is strong and cruel,—do not make him angry or he will beat you.”—Alas ! this fragile little creature knew his strength and his cruelty too well.

“Well, young gentleman, what do you want ?” asked the manager, as I stood before him.

“I want to know,” said I, in a big voice, “whether there is one Moore in your company.”

“No, Sir.”

“May I convince myself by looking into this room ?”

“You may not, Sir,—my wife is there.”

“And no one else ?”

“No one else, young gentleman.”

But having proceeded thus far, I was determined to persevere to the end ; so I pushed past the astonished manager with all the strength that I could summon. The manager was a strong, burly fellow, but the suddenness of my attack almost paralyzed him for the moment, and very much against his will, I entered the forbidden chamber.

One glance was sufficient to tell me that Larry Moore was not there, which was fortunate, as I had no time for a second, before I was in the manager’s arms. I struggled ; but I was like a monthling baby in the arms of a huge giant. The man was full of wrath, and both “strong and cruel” as the

little Sylphide's warning voice had represented him to me in vain. I did not call for assistance, as I knew that I was surrounded by my enemies ; besides, I was too proud ; but I kicked manfully, and my thick boots must have told with some effect upon the bare legs of the manager. And now the strife became deadly ; Mrs. Centaur, half-dressed as she was, forgot her modesty in her fear, and hiding her face between her hands, she wept plentifully, but she knew her husband too well to interpose a word in my behalf. The manager's face was livid with wrath ; mine, I suspect, pale with fear. A little dog, that had been sleeping in the corner of the apartment, set up a shrill bark ; then there was a crash, for we had stumbled against a box, on which stood a gin-bottle and some glasses. The manager looked at the window, but he saw that it was too small to throw me out of it ; and then he trod on the broken glasses, which cut his feet so severely that he cried out with pain. This last accident brought matters to a crisis ; he relaxed his hold of me, and then driving me into a corner, he proceeded to belabour me most unmercifully with the weapons presented him by nature for much better purposes than this. I did my best to repay the brute, but with very unequal success ; for, in the first place, I was not very strong, and in the second place, as my back was against the wall, I could not exercise the little

strength I had, by striking out fairly at my enemy, —an operation which requires the arm to be drawn back before it is thrust forward. It must be acknowledged that I was in a desperate predicament; and being fully aware of this myself, and thinking that any change must be for the better, I dropped my arms, and lowered my head, and ran like a wild bull at the enemy. It was with no little velocity, I am sure, that my head encountered the stomach of the manager; for in a moment we were both of us rolling on the floor, and then — but I scarcely know what followed. The brute must have struck me on the head with some heavy instrument which stunned me. When I came to my recollection I was lying in the snow by the wayside. The van was gone, and the players were gone, but my horse, to its eternal honour, was standing very quietly beside me. I suppose that the animal, accustomed sometimes to have a drunken freight, had learnt to stand still whenever it saw its rider prostrate. But this matters not. I rose up and washed my gory face with a handful of snow, and then I looked about for my hat, but I suppose that I left it in the van, for it was nowhere to be found on the road-side; and then I remounted my horse. My clothes were very wet, and my head ached pitiably; and altogether I must have presented a deplorably woe-begone aspect. I looked at my watch, and it was only

two o'clock ; so that I could not have lain very long on the road. No one had come up during that time, or if they had, they must have passed by on the other side, like the Jew and the Levite in the Parable. With mingled feelings of pride and shame I turned my horse's head towards Merryvale.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WORKER IN THE GOLD MINES.

“ So he became a rare and learned youth :
But O, poor wretch ! he read, and read, and read,
Till his brain turned.”

COLERIDGE.

THE reader may easily divine the reception I met with from the Moores, upon my return that evening to the cottage. The widow was too much grieved at the failure of my operations to express her gratitude for my services, whilst Michael and Ella, on the other hand, almost forgot their sorrow in their thankfulness. The latter, indeed, when she listened to the narrative of my adventures, and saw in my mutilated countenance but too manifest a voucher for its truth, regarded me with an ado-

ration, which would have been sinful, had the source of it been less pure, and she, who encouraged it, less innocent.

Very different, however, was the reception which my story met with from the members of my own family. My mother was very angry, called me a "ridiculous Quixote," and scolded me for losing my hat; my sisters said that my black eyes and my swollen lips had made me "uglier than ever." Arthur observed, that it must have been "capital fun," and that he would have "given anything to have seen the fight," whilst my father brushed a tear from his eyes, and applauded my courage and magnanimity.

"I don't exactly see," remarked my mother, in her usual sarcastic manner, "why you should run after every blackguard boy that chooses to give the slip to his mother."

"I can assure you, mother," said I, "that the boy was by no means a blackguard, and Sir Reginald Euston would tell you the same, if you were to ask him the character of the youth."

"Stuff!" said my mother, "what should *he* know about the scamp? and to tell you the truth, Gerard, I don't think that it is very creditable that *you* should have known one *in that station of life*."

"Oh! mother, I wish that you knew them——"

"I know them! I know such paupers! I won-

der, Gerard, that you have the impudence to hint at anything of the kind."

"Sir Reginald knows them," said I, dryly.

"That's what they tell you," returned my mother; "in short, they seem vile impostors, and they have made you their dupe."

This speech made me very angry, and I replied, "They are no impostors; neither have they told me anything, mother. I have seen Sir Reginald in their cottage; I have seen him break bread beneath their roof; I have seen him sitting beside their fire, and joining in their family prayers. I have seen the elder boy shooting with him, and the younger reading in his library; in short, mother, Sir Reginald esteems the family, and I think that this being the case, I, a much humbler individual, may do the same without dishonour to myself."

"Perhaps the old woman has a daughter," replied my mother, "which may account for Sir Reginald's assiduities."

I could not bear this any longer. The blood mounted upwards to my cheeks, and then suddenly disappeared, leaving them of a deadly whiteness.

"It is plain," said I, "that you know neither one nor the other, or you would have spared this bitter observation;"—and then I walked abruptly out of the room, and sought my little chamber in the attics.

Day after day was gathered to its fathers, and no tidings of Larry Moore reached the ears of his afflicted mother. Time, the comforter, brought no comfort to her, but rather augmented her miseries, because it diminished her hopes. It was a melancholy thing to see her; for a few weeks of anguish had done the work of years upon her person, and her pale face, her wasted frame, her decrepid movements, and her tremulous voice, all indicated a premature decay.

“ — Like a wretched soul,
Muffled with endless darkness, she would sit ;” •

her head resting on her hands, and her elbows on her knees, not uttering a single word. She would fix her eyes on the embers of the fire, or on any other inanimate object, and gaze, and gaze, and gaze, until the dull orbs seemed almost bursting from their sockets, and then she would pass her hand athwart her face, and throwing herself back in her chair, she would close her eye-lids, and appear to sleep, though it was plain that her mind rested not all the while. The presence of Michael and of Ella, seemed to afford her no consolation. It was in vain that I told her often she had other children; her grief for the absent one had absorbed her love of those present; there was now but one feeling in her breast, and to this, with all hopeless-

• Chapman.

ness, she abandoned herself. I often thought to myself, "Had I two jewels like Michael and Ella remaining to me, I would not suffer the loss of a rougher stone to plunge me into such utter desolation." But "the soule of man to man is a roome inscrutable;" * and how could a mere boy fathom the depths of a mother's feelings? "No, no, Mr. Doveton," would the afflicted woman say to me, when I was attempting in vain to console her with my assurances that her lost son might be treading the ways of happiness and honour:—"had it pleased God to take him from me—had I seen him die in my presence, it would have been endurable, for I should then have known that no more evil could befall him, and I should have hoped with a strong hope, that Christ had taken him to himself. But now I know not where he is; I know not what he may be doing. It is this dreadful uncertainty which agonizes me. He may be treading in the sinner's paths, and sitting in the scorner's chair. Evil-minded men may be about him. The oath and the blasphemy ringing in his ears, and the smile of approbation on his lips. Perhaps poverty and shame will be his portion, and that he will sink into the grave, spotted, with no friendly eye to watch over him—no hand to smooth his dying pillow. Oh! Sir, if God had smitten him in the flower of his youth, I should

* Owen Feltham.

have resigned myself without a murmur to my bereavement."

"But surely, Mrs. Moore," said I, soothingly, "this is the portion of every mother, whose son goes forth into the world to seek his fortune,—as who does not? Doubt and uncertainty must be hers, who loses sight of her children."

"But I would not have lost sight of him. Oh! Sir, I know his nature too well; without a pilot, he *must* go astray. He is too wild, too reckless, too full of spirit, to be safe wherever he may be. Had he remained at home, I might have controlled him. You may smile, Sir; but he is to be conquered by love, though never to be subdued by fear. Yes, I would have kept him at home till the hey-day of his young blood had subsided. You shake your head, Mr. Doveton—but, oh! Sir, you never had a son!"

In the mean-time, my brother Arthur, was sent to Eton, and I continued my studies at home.

At school, though I had never been so industrious as my contemporaries, somehow or other, I had always outstripped them. I am willing to hazard a sneer or two at the expense of my vanity, by giving it as my opinion, and I speak from conviction, that what happened in this individual instance, is not generally, nor, indeed, frequently the case. But so it was with me, that

though I did not apply myself very closely to my studies, I advanced with greater rapidity than did my more industrious school-fellows. The truth is, that my mind was endowed, in a high degree, with those analytical faculties, which enable him, who works in the store-houses of knowledge, to separate the grain from the chaff, with little labour and no difficulty. I attacked the leading features of a question, and troubled myself little with its collateral bearings. I liked to condense what I had to acquire into the smallest possible compass. I would strip it of all its superfluities; lop off all the redundant branches from the tree of knowledge, and peel the bark from the trunk, till I got at the naked, unadorned truth; and thus was it, that I always thoroughly comprehended whatever I undertook to learn. This cost me but little trouble; indeed, to use the bold language of our pompous lexicographer, leaving the reader to modify it as he thinks fit,—“I could have *torn the heart out* of a library in the small space of half an hour.”

It cannot be supposed that I acquired much really valuable knowledge at school; but I had brought my intellect into a fit state of preparation, and the husbandman, who has got his soil ready for the sower, has done no little towards the consummation of his harvest. I was now seventeen years of age, and great was my ardour to know.

My soul panted after knowledge. I felt that it is wisdom alone which elevates the man above the brute, and I desired to prove myself worthy of the high place that I held in the universe—worthy of my boasted sovereignty over the other living things of the creation. I aspired, and my aspirations were two-fold ; first of all I aspired *to know* ; and then I aspired *to be known*. Rarely, very rarely, indeed, comes the one longing unaccompanied by the other. Few are they, and great are those few, to whom knowledge is its own “exceeding great reward.” Who have strength which they will not put forth, who feel themselves above their fellows, and yet will not that their ascendancy should be felt ? I was less wise, less noble ; I looked for the reward of knowledge, not in itself, but in the glory that it brings, in the praises that attend it, in the petty vanities of what is miscalled popularity. I was troubled with many far-looking hopes ; it was not enough for me to “walk crowned with inward glory,” to be conscious of my own might, and happy in my own sage reflections. “The self-content of wisest men” was a blessing, which I was too weak to desire ; I said to myself, “Knowledge is but the means of accomplishing an end, which is *fame*.”

Yet, when I examined more closely the nature of my aspirations, I found that their ultimate object was not to be *known*, but to be *loved*. I

looked upon fame, but as the "minister of love." If I desired to exalt myself above my fellows, it was mainly, that I might render myself more worthy to claim their sympathy and affection ; it was with the hope that the admired of the many might be a fit object to be loved by the few. I little thought at that time—neither do I think so now—though I well know that it is a common belief, that there is no greater stumbling-block in the way of love, than fame ; I was more charitable in my philosophy. I did not hold that to be great is to be envied ; for I thought that love and admiration are stronger principles than envy.

" We live by admiration, hope, and love,
And e'en as these are well and wisely fixed,
In dignity of being we ascend ;" *

and I did not think so meanly of my fellow-creatures, as to believe, that by the encouragement of qualities opposite to these, we submit to a state of endless degradation. For, if we ascend by admiration, doubtless by envy we are debased.

It would not be altogether an uninteresting speculation to trace, with all possible subtlety, the reciprocal effects of my moral and intellectual peculiarities upon each other ; to show wherein they harmonized, and wherein they were at dis-

* Wordsworth.

cord :—to follow the several windings of the two streams now blending with, now discoursing from, one another. But I fear that the general reader would not tolerate such a proceeding on my part ; and, therefore, perhaps, it will be most wise to suffer my narrative to pursue a more circumstantial, than metaphysical, path.

I became a student — a severe, unswerving student ; not a mere *helluo librorum*, wandering without rule or method, in the wildernesses of literature, but a rigid seeker after truth, steadily pursuing a predetermined path, and never tempted into even a transitory digression. Yet, when I say that I pursued a certain path, I do not mean to affirm that I confined myself to one particular branch of literature, or science, but that I had chalked out for myself a certain course of study, which, though it diverged into many different ramifications, was still distinguished by unity of design, and that to this course I steadily adhered, fully determined to pursue it unto the end. I read, and the more knowledge I imbibed, the more I desired to know. The further that I advanced into these pleasant regions of “ Science, and Poetry, and Thought,” the more beautiful, and rich, and diversified, and extensive, was the prospect that unfolded itself before my eyes. On I went with the goal steadily in view, strong in hope, and full of courage, turning a deaf ear to all

foreign solicitations, and treading the lowly flowers of life under foot, with a devotedness of self-mortification, which in a higher cause might have gained me an eternal, instead of a temporal, crown.

Month after month passed away, and I felt that I was daily acquiring strength. I had now become the denizen of a new world; but I know not whether it was a world of happiness or of misery; for, in looking back upon this period of my existence, I can distinguish but one feeling,—an all-absorbing desire after knowledge, actuating and wholly engrossing me. In the ardour of my pursuit, I forgot the end, and thought only of the means; or, rather, the ultimate was obscured by the immediate object of my travail;—the means became the end. I lost sight of love and glory in the distance, and beheld only knowledge that was near at hand. Whether I was happy all this time, I do not know;—I never knew. It was all to me like the excitement of battle; I had no breathing moments to consider whether my feelings were pleasurable or otherwise. When I was not actually engaged in study, I was pondering over what I had last read. My brain was always at work,—the thoughts of the closet pursued me into the fields: it was in vain that I went abroad for recreation,—I could not unburthen my mind. I set my body in motion—I bared my forehead to the breeze—I looked

around me at the circumjacent country,—but I could not rid myself of this heavy intellectual thralldom ; —I could not be fancy-free. Even outward objects, which I beheld palpably, took shape and colouring from the most prominent remembrances that my recent studies had stamped upon my mind. I roamed with Petrarch in the meadows about Avignon ; I was with Tasso in the dungeons of Ferrara ; I sate with Ben Jonson, and other choice spirits of “ The Apollo,” in the *Old Devil Tavern*, at Temple-Bar. Then, at other times, when the pages of the metaphysician had been the last over which I had bent, I would fancy myself with Socrates in his Athenian prison, whilst the old man, with a serene aspect, and in a calm voice, delivered that wondrous discourse which Plato has enshrined in his *Phædo* ; or I would sit beside Epictetus, the stoic, in the palace of Marcus Antoninus ; or with Seneca, philosophizing in the death-agony ; or weep over the degradation of our Bacon, whose wisdom redeemed us from the ignorance of the dark ages in which he found us. It was to the study of the leading metaphysical writers of all nations, that I principally devoted myself. System after system did I explore, seeking wisdom in this multitude of counsel, but not finding the jewel that I sought. I searched deeply, and with the most unwearying perseverance ; but the further that I advanced into the inner places

of science, the more hopeless was my uncertainty and bewilderment. I asked, with Pilate, "What is truth?" and first one philosopher, and then another, unfolded his little scroll of intelligence before my eyes, and answered: "Thou wilt find it here: in *my* system is that which you seek." What could I do, thus distracted, but endeavour to judge wisely for myself? *I endeavoured*; and patiently dissecting the machinery of each system, I arrayed their several constituent parts one against the other; and with the utmost candour, and all the discrimination I possessed, did I then attempt to make mine election from amongst the multitude of antagonist arguments which I had laid out for examination before me. I failed: but never was there a failure productive of more lasting advantages. I could not make mine election; I found not what I sought; and the phœnomena of the human mind were greater mysteries to me now than ever. But though I had not unlocked the portals of truth, I had found that which I knew must be a key to them: I *knew the causes of my failure*—and they were these: that I had entered the regions of philosophy without comprehending the language of the philosophers; that there was in this country not one, but many languages; and that this plurality had not only been productive of endless difficulties to all travellers in their domi-

nions, but had likewise been the immediate origin of almost all their intestine disputes.

Having arrived at this discovery, I recommenced my inquiries *de novo*, by endeavouring, after the fashion of the algebraist, to invent a sort of universal vocabulary, to which I might refer all the different terms of different metaphysicians; and thus reducing them to one common language, proceed without any fear of discovering, after months of travail, that I had been following up words instead of ideas, and had made divers journeys, by different roads, all leading to the same final resting-place. How often does the downfall of an error form a pile, whereby we may ascend unto truth.

Month after month passed away, and still found me an unwearying student. My father had been endeavouring all this time to procure me some situation or appointment; but he had lived so long out of the world, that he was almost entirely forgotten by those parties who have the gift of such things; and being poor, he had very little interest with men holding office in the metropolis. The little success, which attended his endeavours, was a source of the keenest mortification to him, and to my mother; but it was none to me. I made no inquiries into the results of his applications; and when any fortuitous allusion was made to the sub-

ject in my presence, I was always rather rejoiced than otherwise to learn that his solicitations had been in vain. Never, at any time of my life, have I been so independent of external circumstances as at the period of which I am now writing. I lived in a world of my own; I scarcely had any knowledge of what was going on around me; and I believe that, if I had been removed in my sleep from one country to another, so long as I had my books around me, I should not have been sensible of the change.

Even Michael and Ella Moore, I almost entirely neglected. It is true that ever and anon I would pay a visit to the cottage, but I scarcely took any interest in the goings-on of its inmates. I had a sort of dim impression, whenever I was in Ella's presence, that a being of exquisite beauty and grace was before me, and that it was mainly for *her* sake that I was heaping up the stores of knowledge, which burthened my over-laden brain. Sometimes, I would sit utterly silent, perhaps for an hour at a time, between Michael and Ella, in their cottage garden, scarcely conscious of their presence; and when the former, after a long discourse upon one of his favourite subjects, would appeal to me, asking my opinion, I would start and stare around me, like one awaking from a dream, and say "What is it that you ask me,

Michael?" or "Ella, upon what theme are we conversing?"

But this state of things could not endure very long; and before the autumnal winds had stripped the trees of their foliage, I became sensible of very strange sensations throughout my whole frame. There was a film over my eyes, a dullness in my brain, a feeling of extreme weakness in all my limbs. I found it difficult to read, and still more difficult to comprehend the little that was reflected upon my vision. There was a continued noise in my ears, as though a rapid stream had been rushing impetuously through my head. All was dim, chaotic, confused. I scarcely knew who I was or where I was. I went about from one room to another, and ordered myself to the daily goings on of life, but all my movements were mechanical. I scarcely had any will to direct me. Others spoke to me, and I made answer, but I knew not what I was saying. I felt neither hunger nor thirst, but I presented myself at all the meals of the family, and ate because I was accustomed to eat. I retired to my chamber at night, but if sleep be a forgetting, I am sure that I rarely slept. I passed many days in a sort of dim consciousness—a glimmering twilight of the intellect—and then at last the crisis is arrived.

I had over-worked my young brain.—One night, after I had retired to my sleeping apartment, all

the sensations, which I have above endeavoured to describe, came upon me with increased violence. I thought that my dissolution was at hand, and that I was about to be benumbed into a state of torpor, which would prove the fore-runner of death. Perhaps I do not employ the right expressions; for I find it extremely difficult to describe my physical sensations. I felt an extreme oppression about every part of my body, and more especially about the regions of my brain. A dull, heavy, binding pain seemed to grasp me. Such was the weight of the super-incumbent atmosphere, that I felt as though mountains were being piled upon me, as they were upon the vanquished Titans.— I opened my chamber window, and I looked around me, but I saw nothing but a pale sheet of silver. The full orb'd moon was shining brightly in an almost unclouded sky, and I was sensible of the light, but of nothing else; no shape—no shadow was distinguishable. I endeavoured to collect myself, but in vain. I walked up and down the room once or twice, thinking that, perhaps, motion might relieve me, but something heavy seemed clinging around me, and my limbs were exceeding weak. I shook myself, but to no purpose, for I could not set myself free. Then I sate down upon the ground, and I bathed my temples with water, and went again to the open window, that the night-air might blow upon my

forehead ; but I felt no coolness therefrom. Then I threw myself down on the bare floor, and pressed my hands tightly against both sides of my head, for the noise which I now heard was like the roaring of a mighty cataract, and all was darkness, both within and without. I had no other sensations but that of a continuous flowing through the cavities of my brain, and of a binding feeling about my brow, as though it were girt about with a circlet of iron ; and then suddenly all was still, and I seemed to fall into a complete insensibility. The noise had ceased, and the pain had ceased, and I was conscious of nothing further.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PHRENETICK.

“ Then I had visions though I never slept,
But aye my senses kept,
Wild, troubled visions, which I could not quell
Although I knew right well,
That my distempered brain saw many things,
Which were invisible.”

MS.

THEY took me up in a delirious fever. I know not how many days the phrenzy was upon me; but when my mind first struggled into consciousness, I thought that I beheld a person sitting by my bed-side, who resembled the Widow Moore, and that when I turned myself round I beheld a figure, “garmented in light,” like a seraph, which

when I looked upon it glided across the room and then vanished, leaving all things in gloom. I thought that this luminous figure wore the likeness of Ella Moore, but whether I beheld the real image of the young maiden, or only a bright vision, my dawning faculties were involved in too deep a twilight to determine.

But again and again, at intervals, gleamed the luminous apparition before my eyes, whilst the figure that I had first beheld, still remained in its old position, almost motionless by the side of my bed. My chamber was almost dark, but this thing of light, whenever it appeared, seemed to irradiate the whole apartment. At length I stretched forth my arms, as though I would embrace it, and turning to the stationary figure, I said "What is that light?" Then the form, which had been seated all this time, rose up and left my bed for a moment, and almost instantly I was in utter darkness; and I saw no more of the luminous figure.

Then I sunk again into a state of insensibility; and when the light of reason once more began to dawn upon my brain, I endeavoured to identify my situation, and to trace the course of events which had brought me into this perilous state; but I could do neither the one thing nor the other. I knew that my intellect was diseased, and that my body was in a fearful condition; but there

was no longer any association of ideas in my mind ; I could neither deduce my present sensations from any antecedent train of events, nor indeed had I any knowledge of myself in connexion with external circumstances. I was conscious but of my abstract individuality : I knew what I was, but neither who, nor where, I was. I knew that I was an unfortunate sufferer, in the extremity of a mortal fever—that I had been phrenetic, and was still slightly delirious—that I was very weak from a great loss of blood—and lastly, that perhaps I was dying. But this condition of mind was not suffered to endure very long ; a change came over me ; and in that change, was involved what may be looked upon as an extraordinary intellectual phenomenon.

Silvio Pellico, the Italian poet, in that interesting and pathetic narrative of his ‘Ten Years’ Imprisonment,’ relates that, during a severe fever which afflicted him in the course of his confinement, he imagined himself to be *two persons* ; of which the one with the other was keeping up a constant correspondence.—Now my individuality was tri-partite ; my soul divided itself, and entered into *three* different bodies : in short, I was precisely in the same situation with Cerberus, for I was “three gentlemen at once.”

I accounted in some measure, for this “Trinity

in unity,"* of my profane nature, by the circumstance of my recumbent frame, consorting itself day after day to a triple mutability of posture ; to wit, one dorsal and two lateral positions, which was all the change of attitude allowed to me ; indeed, all that I was capable of effecting. I remember, with a vividness of recollection half-painful and half ludicrous now, the good understanding which existed between the three persons of my Trinity, the consciousness, which they seemed to entertain, that the joint happiness of the body corporate, depended upon the united efforts of the individual thirds—the interested disinterestedness of each ; the self-denying self-love, which in yielding its own claims, seemed to know that it advanced its own pleasures—the full knowledge, which each person exhibited, of all the intricacies of its triune nature. How distinctly do I call them to my mind ! With what a topping courtesy of address did one ask permission of the other, to transfer the onus of my body, from the dexter to the sinister side, "if it did not interfere with the

* I disclaim all irreverent intentions in this allusion. I need scarcely suggest to the reader that what I am here describing is not an imaginary state of things, but a record of what I have actually endured. The words "Trinity in Unity," which are not scriptural but liturgical, occurred to me, during the time of my illness, as being peculiarly applicable to my condition. I have tained them, being utterly unable to find a synonym sufficiently expressive.

arrangements of the latter; or conduce in any way to its discomfort." What consideration and urbanity was there in the mingled distress and fear, with which one, half longing half doubting, would soliloquize in abstaining silence. — " I should like to rest a little while; for I am weary; but then, peradventure I am selfish."—Assuredly, if the three graces had been set to work for Father Atlas, they could not have divided the labour of sustaining the world on their delicate shoulders with more courtesy of manner, or more sisterly devotion of heart, than did my right side, my left side, and my back, outdo one another in urbanity of demeanour, and sacrificial tenderness of heart, striving which should sustain the greater share of the joint labours imposed upon the Trinity.— Methinks, 'twill be a weary time, ere " we three " shall be chaunted again with the same unison of feeling, and the same singleness of voice! Peace to the *manes* of my triune self!

At other times, when the triumvirate madness was not upon me, I had the wildest waking visions day and night, that ever troubled man's brain with delirium. Yet the worst of it all was this; that sleeping I was never asleep; and waking I was never awake. I had, distinctly, two sets of ideas—the one confused, strange, and inextricable; the other reasoning, judging, calculating. The

most phantastic and disordered imaginations, which a mind distraught ever conceived, danced before my eyes, and haunted me ; but *my other* mind, imbued with all the strength of my reasoning faculties, in their healthiest state, speculated, with great subtlety, upon the nature of those shadowy vagaries, those delusive creations of a diseased brain, which, although I knew them to be unreal, and could trace them to the source from whence they came, I could not by any effort of mind, by any process of thought, dispel. The healthier part of my intellect was unusually discriminative at that time. Perhaps, never, at any period of my life, was it capable of more delicate investigations—more able to follow with perspicuity the most complicated windings of physical philosophy. A variety of new combinations affecting the nature and workings of the human mind, and arising out of the novel and unprecedented state of my intellect at that time, were presented to, and seized upon, and enquired into, by those remaining energies of my mind, which sickness, so far from having impaired, had rendered more accurate and scrutinizing, than they were wont to have been, when the soundness of my body was intact. It is inconceivable what advantage I derived from this half-healthy, half-diseased, state of mind. It was, as though, to borrow a metaphor from the body, increased

powers of vision had been given to one eye, to mark the progress of blindness in the other. My intellect was compressed into a small compass—driven into a corner and straightened; it looked through an eyelet hole and saw little, but what it did see was remarkably distinct. The whole external world was involved in obscurity and confusion. I did not know precisely whether I was on land or at sea; I discerned not one person from another; I recked not whether it was day or night, winter or summer; I poured forth a most unintelligible medley of words, and asked the most extravagant questions; but I knew well enough, all the time, that I was uttering the wildest nonsense; though I had not the power to control myself, or to model my words into meaning. I was self-involved; there was a certain inward harmony still existing, to regulate my abstract investigations; there was great order and method in my thoughts whilst they confined themselves solely to the impalpable; but with the outward world they were utterly discordant; they could not adapt themselves to the realities of life; they were ignorant of all language but soliloquy. I was like the man, whom I have read of in a ‘Tale of Wonder,’ who saw nothing but himself; the whole of the visible world beside was involved in the deepest obscurity. My intellect revolved around its own orbit; and abstained from

all foreign excursions. The mechanism of my own mind—the source of my errant thoughts—the nature of my complexed imagination—were the subjects of my ceaseless speculation. And many were the discoveries I made—many the unforeseen lights which flashed across my brain, and informed me; but they passed away, and profited me nought, for my memory was weakened by disease; and I could not convey my thoughts into lasting characters, nor communicate them to be recorded by another.

But at length my delirium passed away. My disease wore a milder aspect, and my thoughts assumed a more every-day tone. I began to entertain more specific ideas relating to my unfortunate situation. My memory resumed its functions, and I recognized the chamber where I lay. I awoke one morning, from a heavy, dreamless sleep, and I was conscious of a great change. I unclosed my eyes, and I saw things distinctly. The curtains of the bed on which I was lying were drawn round me, but recognizing their pattern, I knew at once in what apartment they had placed me. Then I stretched forth one of my emaciated arms, and partly drawing back the curtain, which hemmed me in on every side, I beheld Mrs. Moore sitting by my bed.

I spoke.—“Mrs. Moore, I am better.”

“I know you are,” replied the widow, in a low

voice; "but you had better not talk with me yet."

"Oh! I must, I must indeed."

"Hush, I shall leave you if you do."

"No, no,—don't leave me, I shall die if you leave me, Mrs. Moore."

"Be calm,—excitement will be dangerous,—you had better not talk to me indeed."

"Oh! yes, only a few words,—just one or two little questions, and then I will be silent for an hour."

"Well, then—"

"Have I said anything to you, Mrs. Moore, during my illness, about a light in the room?"

"Yes, you did some days ago, and I immediately closed the window shutters."

"Yes—but I did not mean that light. I meant a luminous figure like an angel's that was flitting about the room, when I spoke. I have seen it since, often in my chamber—a bright, beautiful figure, with dazzling hair and white drapery, and once or twice it has bent over me, and it has sate where you are sitting now, and I should have thought it had come from Heaven if I had not felt its sweet breath upon my cheek."

There was a smile on Mrs. Moore's face as she replied, "You must mean Ella."

"Ah! I thought so. But where is she now?"

"Not very far off, Mr. Gerard."

"Oh ! bring her to me,—bring her to me now,—bring her to me, I beseech you, that I may bless her."

"Be calm,—pray be calm,—if you excite yourself I will not speak another word to you."

"And you will not bring Ella to me then?"

"Not now—another day,—another day, and you shall see her."

"Another day say you? *To-morrow?*"

"Perhaps."

"Ah ! good Mrs. Moore,—but tell me how come you beside me?"

"I am your nurse."

"My nurse!—did my mother send for you then?"

"Not exactly ; I offered my services."

"Oh ! kind, good woman !"

"Neither kind, nor good, but grateful."

"And is not that being both?—But tell me now, has Michael been to see me?"

"Every day ; and more than once has he watched beside you in the night-season."

"And my mother—"

"What avail these questions ? Have I not now answered enough for to-day."

"My last question will not bear answering."

"It will.—She has visited you daily."

"And my father—"

"Has *wept* beside your couch."

“ *Wept*;—and my father has wept over me ! But one more question, Mrs. Moore.—Have you heard aught of Lawrence ?”

“ *That* question will not bear an answer,—enough,”—and the widow Moore. closed the curtains of my bed, and I heard a noise, as of suppressed sobs, which told me that I had touched unwisely upon a far too sensitive chord.

Methinks that is a pleasant state of mind, which follows a debilitating sickness,—that midway condition between disease and health, which resembles the state of the transmigrating insect, when it is not altogether a grub, though it is very imperfectly a butterfly. I do not know any period of my life at which I have been more sanguine and full of hope than I was during this season of convalescence. I built up the loftiest castles in the air, which were ever constructed by that great architect, Fancy ; and devised with most elaborate minuteness all the furniture of these airy fabrics. The mind seems especially prone to grasp at minutiae during convalescence ; it is less trouble to think of small things than to encompass affairs of greater magnitude, and the intellect weak and sickly endeavours to save itself from any violent exertion. Memory likewise at this season is always peculiarly vivid. Numberless little long-forgotten incidents now rise up, like ghosts from out their tombs, and assume a degree

of importance which never has been ceded to them before. Small blessings too are magnified tenfold, and we yearn after many little things which hitherto we have disregarded and despised. Every thing too which we behold is vested with new beauty,—every thing which we feel, with new delight,—the sky is never so blue,—the fields are never so green,—the air is never so fresh,—and what joy is there, when for the first time we walk unassisted across the room! Therefore do I think, hope, and memory, and present enjoyment, being all rendered keener thereby, that there is exceeding pleasure in that benign state, which, if death puts not his *veto* upon all succession, is the natural successor of sickness.

But there was one joy, which I treasure up in my memory paramount over all other joys,—my first interview, after my recovery, with Ella.—Oh! how I blessed the luminous apparition that had flitted round my sick-bed, and how Ella wept with joy in my presence.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE POET, THE PAINTER, AND THE SORTES
WORDSWORTHIANÆ.

“ Science and poetry and thought
Are thy lamps ; they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot
So serene, they curse it not.”

SHELLEY.

MRS. MOORE, upon first learning that I was prostrated by sickness, had walked up to my father's house, and offered herself to my mother as a nurse. Seeing that Mrs. Doveton was somewhat astonished at the nature of this request, and anticipating a harsh denial, the widow woman, with the utmost humility, said, “ Madam, I would not have ventured to solicit this favour at your hands, did I not feel that much experience in the chambers of the sick has rendered me, at least as well

fitted as any other to be the nurse of your son ; and you may rest assured that I will watch over him as vigilantly as the fondest mother ever watched over her child, neither asking nor desiring any reward for my services, but tending him as a labour of love. Oh, madam ! your son has been kind, very kind, to me and my children, and if you would but suffer me thus to testify my gratitude, you will confer a benefit upon a poor afflicted woman, which will entitle you to her daily prayers. Remember, madam, that I come not as a hireling, and that all I desire is to watch over your son."

My mother, ever since my adventure with the equestrians, had been strangely prejudiced against the family of the Moores. She had never seen them, and, to remove all unfavourable prejudices, they needed only to be seen. So it happened upon the present occasion ; for the neat, yet un-presuming, attire of the widow woman, her mild, pensive countenance, her low, soft voice, and, above all, her humble bearing, won the good opinion even of my mother, who believed the sincerity of her protestations, and readily granted her suit.

But Mrs. Moore had not been invested many hours in her office, before two new petitioners presented themselves, and Michael and Ella appeared before my mother.

Mrs. Doveton was in one of her blindest moods. She had just received a long letter from Arthur, informing her that Eton was the "capitalest place in the whole world for a spree;" and as this letter was written in high health and spirits, my mother, fortunately for the Moores, was in one of her most amiable humours, and she received Michael and Ella with a degree of urbanity which almost amounted to kindness.

"We have come, madam," said Michael, acting as spokesman, "to ask whether you will kindly permit us to visit our mother now and then in the sick-chamber; to bring whatever she may require; and sometimes to relieve her when she is weary?"

"Are you not too young, think you," asked my mother, "to be of much use in nursing the sick?"

"Oh! no, no, madam," cried Ella, interrupting her brother, who was about to speak;—"the weakest become very strong in the service of those whom they love."

When the young maid had said this, she cast down her eyes, and blushed; she felt that she had said too much; that she had presumed upon Mrs. Doveton's condescension; and that both the words she had uttered, and the manner in which she had uttered them, were unbecoming to one in her lowly condition. Poor Ella!—what would she not have given to have unsaid those few words!

My mother saw the confusion of the girl, and

enhanced it no little by saying, "*Love!* child;—what do you know of love?—But, tell me, why are you blushing?"

Michael answered for her.—"She thinks that she has done wrong in speaking to you, madam, with such earnestness."

"Never mind, child," said my mother, addressing herself to Ella;—"never mind; I readily forgive you. I like to see young people modest—and blushes denote modesty. How old are you, my pretty girl?"

"I am fifteen, madam," replied Ella;—"that is, I shall be sixteen next May."

"And you," turning to Michael,—"*you* are a very handsome boy;—how old are you?"

It was now Michael's turn to blush. "If you please, madam," said he, "I am one year older than my sister."

"And what does your mother intend to do with you? It is time that you were apprenticed to a profession."

"Sir Reginald Euston has been kind enough to promise to assist me," replied Michael.

"In what way?" asked my mother.

"In any way that I please, madam," said Michael.—"In the church."

"He will use his interest to get you made clerk of the parish."

Michael's cheeks were dyed with crimson, as he

answered, "No, madam; he will send me to college."

My mother looked at Ella's beautiful face, and at her exquisitely graceful figure, and *smiled*. I doubt not but that smile was indicative of very great sagacity.

"Does Sir Reginald often pay a visit to your cottage?" asked my mother, fixing her searching eyes full upon Ella, as she spoke.

"Yes, madam," replied Ella, with a perfectly untroubled aspect;—"he does sometimes come to inquire after us; but his visits are very few now, compared with what they were when we were children."

"And why is that?"

"I cannot guess," replied Ella.

Nor could my mother; for she expected that the case would have been otherwise: nor could Michael, for he was guileless as his sister. But Sir Reginald well knew the reason. He had slackened in his visits to the cottage that he might escape those very suspicions which had found their way into the breast of my mother. Alas! it is a hard thing, that our very virtues should expose us to calumny; and that charity, the best of all virtues, should be that which is most frequently suspected.

I will not lengthen out this conference. My mother with certain restrictions, granted the peti-

tion of Ella and Michael. They were admitted to assist their mother, to lighten the toils of my nurse.

I recovered ; the physician took his leave, and once again health circulated through my veins.

I think that it is Martial, who says, "*Non est vivere sed valere vita*,"—not to live, but to live in health, is life ;—and fully impressed with this belief, I resolved never again thus wantonly to lose sight of that supreme blessing, the delights of whose presence we know not how to estimate, until we have tasted the miseries of its absence.

'Tis only when they spring to heaven that angels
Reveal themselves to you ; they sit all day
Beside you, and lie down at night by you,
Who care not for their presence, muse or sleep,
And all at once they leave you, and you know them. *

The first book that I read after my illness was *Tom Jones*, and the second was *Wilhelm Meister*. All my volumes of Metaphysics had been scrupulously removed out of my sight, a precaution, indeed, which was useless, for neither *ontology*, nor *deontology*, had any longer any charms for me. I was only permitted to read for a given portion of time every day, but never at any period of life,

* From PARACELSUS, by Robert Browning, a poem, the perusal of which has afforded me such intense delight, that I must ever feel grateful to its author.

have I derived such intense pleasure from reading ; so true is it, that the limitation of our joys is the best augments of our enjoyment.

I read many works of fiction ; and a new field of intellectual adventure now seemed to expand itself before my eyes. My old yearnings came back upon me with renewed force, but not so much to know, as to be known. I said to myself, " May not *I* create ? may not my imagination body forth a series of fictitious adventures ? May not I, even I, disperse the emanations of my mind amongst men ?" The first answer which I returned to my own question, after reflection, was " Doubtless, I may,"—my second was, " Doubtless, I *will*,"—and immediately I began to create.

I will not dwell upon my ambitious cravings, my dreams of fame, my inordinate vanity ; such themes have been dwelt upon too often ; let it suffice that I set about the construction of a work of fictitious adventure. I had certain qualifications which fitted me for the task, but I had not *all* the essential qualifications. An exuberant imagination, much subtlety of thought, and no inconsiderable knowledge of the mechanism of the human mind, to which I may add a very fair quantity of ready, off-hand information, were mine ; but I was little acquainted with the external indications of character : I could trace the inward workings, but not the outward manifestations of

the human mind in all its various idiosyncracies ; but above all, I was lamentably deficient in all the mechanical parts of authorship. I had no method—and method is as essential to an author, as it is to a house-keeper.

I wrote in my own chamber, and principally at night ; but I was somewhat chary of my labours. I did not forget, in the excitement of authorship, the miserable ordeal to which I had been subjected by my late indiscretions ; so I devoted but two hours in the day to composition, I mean to verbal composition ; for my creative faculties, waking or sleeping, were seldom or never idle. When I wrote, I wrote with great rapidity, and generally with the tears streaming down my face. I could not have written in the presence of another, and I kept my authorship a profound secret, which I imparted to none but to Michael and Ella. There have been times when the excitement of composition has been so intense, that overcome by my feelings, I have been forced to throw aside the pen ; but it seldom or never happens that the reader is most moved by those passages of a narrative which have been written with the greatest emotion. The most prominent delineations of feeling excite the sensibilities of the reader :—it is the under-current of pathos that fills the eyes of an author with tears.

Should any one, feeling interested in my adven-

tures, seek to know the nature of my work, I will tell them that it was a sort of psychological narrative, in which the different persons of my history represented certain abstract qualities, acted upon and modified by one another, and directed or misdirected by circumstances. There was a dim vein of allegory, almost indiscernible by the many, permeating every incident of my narrative. I was cautious that the weight of my philosophy should not encumber the progress of my history; and to accomplish this, I dressed up all my abstract truths in masquerade garments of fictitious anecdote, leaving the reader to detect my design or not, according to the keenness of his penetration. And, in truth, the public is not unlike a child, whom we must cheat into swallowing the health-bearing medicine by disguising it with some savory compound.

The later months of autumn passed away; winter followed, and I was still at home,—still engaged upon my secretly-cherished work. I passed my days chiefly abroad in the fields, taking as much bodily exercise as possible, for not only did I find that this species of exertion much benefited my physical health, but that my intellectual energies were never so vigorous as when my body was in motion. During my walks, I struck out more original ideas than ever I did in my closet; and many of the conceptions to which I thus gave

birth, were infinitely more striking and novel than those which I produced at home with far greater difficulty and travail. Conscious of this, and unwilling to lose the best emanations of my intellect, I determined never to go abroad without a notebook, in which I might set down my thoughts as they occurred to me. But this experiment was a lamentable failure, for the very consciousness that I had it in my power to catch and to perpetuate every passing impulse, strangled all those impulses in their birth, and I soon found, that whilst I was always in readiness to record my impressions, I had no impressions worthy of being recorded. Freedom is the natural aliment of the imagination; and fancy will not disport itself when it is conscious of being watched.

One of my favourite occupations was limning. I would pass hours together embodying on a flat surface the beautiful ideas which were crowding upon my brain. It was in this manner that I unburthened my soul when it was too full of lovely images—it was in this manner that I cooled my over-heated imagination. Reader, do you know what it is to be haunted by a strange shape, of exquisite beauty and grace, which stands before thee at thine up-rising, and sits beside thee in the stillness of evening, and gleams through the darkness of the night-season, until, though at first it was a delight, its omnipresence has become to

thee a curse? Thou dost—then, by such shapes I was haunted; sometimes in the fashion of a seraph-maiden, sometimes in the likeness of a boy-angel, sometimes as a radiant image, whose sex I knew not, yellow-haired and white garmented. And these shapes, when they had haunted me for a season, I realized by the aid of lines and colours, dimly and imperfectly it is true; but still, when I beheld them palpably before me, they ceased to haunt my imagination—I had unburthened myself—I had confessed myself, as it were, and rid myself of this spiritual thralldom.

But not only by visions of my own imagination was I haunted at this season of my life, but by the ideal creations of other minds—poets', painters', sculptors', or novellists'. I well remember how an image of Psyche, carved out of white marble, was wakened into life by the magic wand of my imagination, and how it sate beside me day after day, abroad in the meadows, or at home in my chamber, until its very loveliness disquieted me with vain yearnings, to possess what I knew to be unreal and phantastical. Often, too, has a painted figure of a nymph, a seraph, or of a little child, become life-like, and seemed to breathe, whilst I gazed at it, and when I have turned away it has followed me, and been my companion for days. But still more frequently was I haunted by the creations of the poet, and the novellist.

Ariel, and Una, and Euphrasia, and Mignon, have in turn been my beautiful associates. I have seen them beside me in the day-light—I have embraced them in my visions of the night—I have embodied my dreams upon the canvas; but no eye save my own, has beheld them.—I painted only for myself.

I taught Michael to draw—but little teaching did the boy require, for he was endowed with a most exquisite perception of the art,—yet his genius was not kindred with mine. To imitate, with lines and colours, the beauties of inanimate nature was Michael's pleasure, whilst I delighted in embodying, if not always human loveliness, yet at least such shapes as presented themselves to my imagination, in the likeness of humanity.

One day Michael asked me how it came to pass that I delighted so little in the beauties and benignities of inanimate nature, and why I never attempted to perpetuate some of its most beautiful aspects by transferring them to the canvass?—"Because, Michael," I replied, "my childhood was passed in a city."

Michael smiled incredulously, and I continued, "My first impressions were derived from brick houses and crowded thoroughfares. Human nature I beheld under various modifications, but of inanimate nature I saw little more than the sky above me, and that, for the most part, was ob-

scured by the dense smoke of the ever-busy metropolis. All the beauty that I beheld in my childhood, was *human* beauty, and therefore did I learn——”

“ Oh ! yes, Gerard, I know what you mean,” interrupted Ella, who was sitting by my side——“ I understand you, simple as I am ; and it is your kindness that has taught me to comprehend——your kindness that has made me thus wise.”

“ My kindness, Ella ? ”

“ Yes, Gerard, in these volumes, which are your gift, have I read these things. In Wordsworth—the Wordsworth that you gave me. Do you know, Gerard, that these volumes have taught me, more than all the other books I have read, to comprehend your wisdom—and Michael’s,”—and having said this, Ella opened a volume and read, addressing herself to me in the language of our philosophical poet,—

“ Amid the smoke of cities did you pass,
The time of early youth ; and there you learned
From years of quiet industry, to love
The living beings by your own fire-side
With such a strong devotion that you heart
Is slow towards the sympathies of them,
Who look upon the hills with tenderness
And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
Yet we who are transgressors in this kind,
Dwelling retired in our simplicity
Among the woods and fields, WE LOVE YOU WELL.”

Here Ella paused, and her cheeks were suffused, with blushes. The last three lines of the passage she had read were so very, very true,—they described her own condition, and echoed her own feelings so exactly, that when she closed the volume she thought that she had been guilty of an indiscretion in quoting such a passage in my presence, and in addressing it directly to me.

But Michael's face beamed with delight, as he bent his eyes affectionately upon me, and said, "How true it all is! We who are 'transgressors in this kind,' yes, Gerard, '*we love you well.*'"

"I am happy, very happy in your love, Michael."

There was a pause, for our hearts were exceeding full.—I laid my hand gently upon Ella's.

Then I spoke, "Methinks, Ella, that Mr. Wordsworth must have looked upon you."

"Upon *me*?"—and Ella lifted up her eyes with a look of wonderment on her beautiful face.

"Yes, upon *you*, Ella; for he has described you in a passage that I remember."

"I do not understand you this time," said Ella.

"Then Wordsworth shall teach you again,"—and taking up the volume that lay beside me, I read the following passage from the "Excursion."

"Serious and thoughtful was her mind, and yet
By reconcilment exquisite and rare

The form, port, motions of the cottage girl
Were such as might have quickened and inspired
A Titian's hand, addressed to picture forth
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade."

And then a little further on, I read—

"No one touched the ground
So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
Less gracefully were braided."

"But read on—read on," cried Ella, in tones
of mingled archness and reproach,—“nay, if you
will not, I will finish the sentence from memory.
—Runs it not thus, Gerard,—

————— “*But this praise
Methinks, would better suit another place?*”

“Now confess, Gerard,” said Michael, laughing
as he spoke,—“that the simple Ella has beaten
you with your own weapons of verse.”

“Nay, Michael, I will confess nothing; for
praise can suit no place better than that in which
it is most deserved.”

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SENTENCE AND THE REPRIEVE.

“ There is no hope,
And utter darkness curtains me around
On this side and on that —
But there is hope—
The Lord Antonio—you must sue to him,—
The Lord Antonio—he is great and good :
Tell him that you are wretched—he will raise you.”
Old Play.

“ SAY something kind to me, Ella,—say something kind to me, Mike,”—thus was it that, a few months after the date of the last chapter, I unburthened my heavy-laden heart. It was spring-time,—

“ The season sweet of budding leaves,
And days advancing to their utmost length,
And small birds singing to their happy mates.”

The sun was shining brightly,—the air was mild, though not yet warm,—the fields were decked in their freshest verdure, and all things were gay, and bright, and cheerful, save my heavy-laden heart.

Ella and Michael were sitting on the brow of a turf-clad hill, which over-looked their little cottage. They were sunning themselves, in the full enjoyment of many, and great blessings,—the genial climate,—the bright sky,—the lovely prospect,—the melody of the birds, and, above all, the presence of one another.

“Say something kind to me, Ella,—say something kind to me, Mike,” I cried out, in a voice of anguish, as I seated myself between them on the turf.

Brother and sister each laid a hand upon my shoulder, and looking with inquiring fondness into my face, said, “What is it, Gerard, that affects you?”

“Thank you, Michael; thank you, Ella,—I’m better, much better now. Those few kind words have restored me. Believe me, that there is no better medicine than kindness for a sick heart.”

“But what ails thee, Gerard?” asked Ella, whilst her beautiful, blue eyes glistened with unshed tears.

“Oh! nothing, Ella; methinks it were a sin to be sorrowful on such a day as this.”

“Nay, Gerard; but there is something at your

heart,—something that weighs heavily. Who has been so cruel as to wrong that tender heart of yours with unkindness?"

"God forbid, Ella, that I should think myself wronged. God forbid that I should tax any one with unkindness."

"Ah! Gerard; thus is it with you always. You are full of forbearance, and it is noble to forbear; but you have been wronged—cruelly wronged, or you would not have asked in such a voice of anguish for a few kind words.—Michael, you are wiser than I am: speak words of comfort to him, Michael."

"You are very kind, Ella; but you see that I scarcely need a comforter now. Michael, we will talk about nature.—How beautiful and how full of blessings is this great universe. I have been thinking that we may love nature very much without abating one tittle of our human love—

"Love and the thoughts that yearn for human-kind," as the Poet calls it. I'll tell you what, Michael, I am vastly beneath you, as a philosopher. I grovel and you soar. I do, indeed; nay, do not interrupt me.—As I live, Michael, there is a yellow-winged butterfly. Do you think that I could catch it if I were to try?"

Michael looked at me, but made no answer; and I continued. "Why, I have not chased a butterfly these many days; yet I'll wager, Michael, that

I'll catch you this little flutterer before half an hour has passed.—See, now; it has settled; I'll be after it.—But, come, Ella, I'll stake this golden ring against a lock of your golden hair.”

Michael laid his hand upon my arm.—“ Stay, Gerard, stay, I beseech you; I do not like this wild mirth; there is frenzy in it. Now sit down beside me, and speak calmly: this gaiety is forced. Think you, that I cannot read in your face that there is a world of agony in your heart? Think you, Gerard, that we, who know you so well, and have watched the changes on your countenance so long, are to be deceived by a few incoherent words of gaiety, and a burst or two of constrained laughter? Gerard, we know you better;—we know that your heart is sad.”

Ella sat by, weeping like a child. She could scarcely say to me, through her tears, “ Listen to him—listen to Michael.”

Then Michael continued, in his calm, clear voice, —“ Gerard, you may deceive yourself, but you cannot deceive us. You may think, like the fever-stricken mariner, that you behold pleasant fields and green herbage, when nought but the bleak, dreary ocean surrounds you on every side. But we, who stand by, Gerard, see too plainly the calenture that is preying upon you. Yes, indeed; we know that you are sad, *very* sad: then do not mock yourself,—the mask that you wear does not

become you—cast it aside, Gerard, 'tis a poor disguise, and we can read your heart plainly enough. I speak as I ought not to speak; but your kindness has taught me to be bold."

But Ella could only say, through her tears,—
"Listen to him—listen to Michael; for there is truth and wisdom in what he declares."

At length, I spoke.—"Michael, your hand; and Ella, yours;—how soft and white it is! You are right, very right, dear friends: I *am* sad—my heart is overladen; it is in vain to wear the mask any longer; for you see through this shallow disguise. Now tell me, Ella, of all things in the world, what, think you, would make me most sad?"

"I cannot tell," replied Ella.

"Nor you, Michael?"

Michael shook his head sorrowfully, and I answered my own question.—"Why, to leave you, my sweet friends."

"To leave us!—oh! not that," cried Ella, waxing very pale as she spoke.

"Yes, Ella—the fiat has gone forth. I *am* to leave you; and whither, think ye, I am going, my own, dear friends?"

"To London?"

"Nay, Ella,—nay, Michael; that were, indeed, but a short journey. I am going where we all must go: thus early, I am going to *my grave*."

"Stay, Gerard; this is fearful jesting," cried

Michael, in tones of calm rebuke. "No good ever came of talking thus; it is sinful. Believe me, it is sinful; and, indeed, it is not kind."

Ella's face was like an image of white marble; and, but for a slight convulsive tremor of her lips, you would scarcely have thought that there was any life in a countenance so rigid and hueless. Michael perceived this change in the aspect of his sister, and looking towards her, he laid one hand upon my shoulder, whilst with the other he pointed at Ella. "Look there, Gerard!" — he whispered in a voice only audible to me.

There was a silence, which Ella was the first to break. "Now, indeed, Gerard, do I believe that you are only doing this to try us."

"No, Ella."

"Then you have read too much: those books have again bewildered you."

"No, dear!—but I will speak out at once: I am going to *Sierra Leone*."

"To *Sierra Leone*?"

"Yes; it is a place beyond the seas—I scarcely know where it is; but they call it the *White Man's Grave*."

"No, no, Gerard; you must not go there," cried Ella, trembling all over, and looking into my face, as she spoke, with an aspect of touching supplication. "Why should you go to that strange place, when, in your own country, there are so many

blessings? Oh, Gerard! continue amongst us—with thine own people, with thy true friends, with us. I beseech thee to go not; yes, I—I, a poor cottage-girl,—I beseech thee, though I am very simple, very weak; and you—”

“Hold, Ella;—we will talk calmly. I must not be a burthen upon my family. I must not eat the bread of indolence. The time has now come, at which it behoves me to take the sword into my hand, and to carve my way through the world. I stand now upon the verge of manhood. I must go forth to seek my fortune. The path has been chalked out for me by others; by them whose right, whose duty it is to direct me in the way that I should go. A distant country has been pointed out to me as my destined sphere of action: I must go there. It is in vain to murmur, Ella, against the decrees of inevitable fate. All that I can ask you to do is, to pray for me when I am gone. God is merciful. He says, ‘Ask, and it shall be given;’ and the prayers of the innocent, and the pure of heart, can never be offered up in vain.”

When I ceased to speak, Ella laid her hand upon my arm; her countenance had suddenly assumed a brighter, a more hopeful aspect; and her delicate limbs no longer trembled with emotion and fear.

“Listen to me, Gerard,” she said, “for I know what you must do. You must go to Sir Reginald

Euston ; he will help us, I know that he will help us, for to raise the wretched is his delight. You shake your head ; ah ! I know that look ; 'tis a bad look, 'tis a look of pride. Gerard, you will go to Sir Reginald, you *will* ; for I can read your face like a book ; and now it is more mild, more calm, more full of wisdom ; and you will tell Sir Reginald — but shall I dictate to you ? Gerard, you know what to do."

" Indeed, Ella, I do not know. Sir Reginald has been a kind friend to me ; but though he has done much for me, I have asked nothing, and I scarcely know with what favour he would receive me in the character of a petitioner."

" Be sure, Gerard, that whatever you ask, he will do for you, I know he will ; go to him, say that your parents are about to send you to that hateful place, and beseech him, if he loves, to save, you."

" But how can ~~we~~ save me, Ella ?"

" He has power—he is a great man—he is very rich, and he might get you a post—a post of honour and profit, which none would grace so well as yourself."

" And what if I should fail, Ella ?"

" You cannot fail."

" But what if I should ?"

" Why, then,"—and she pondered for a moment ;—" why, then,—how could we have forgotten

it? — There is your *book*, Gerard, there is your *book*."

"And what if my book should fail?"

"It will not, it cannot fail."

I smiled, and said, "Ella, if I were sure of having always such kind critics as you, I would spend my life in writing books for their amusement."

"But you will go, Gerard, to the hall?"

"I will, I will go directly; good bye, Ella; good bye, Mike;" — and I started up suddenly from my recumbent posture, and ran down the slope of the hill, shouting all the way as I went.

I had promised Sir Reginald Euston that, should I ever require any favour at his hands, I would not hesitate to ask it. The baronet, ever since the day on which I had saved the life of his horse, had been unremitting in his little acts of kindness towards me, and he had often said, "How comes it, Gerard, that you never ask me to do anything for you, not even so much as to lend you a book, or to mount you, or give you a day's shooting? I do not find that others are so scrupulous; and 'tis a pity that they whom I would most readily serve, should be the most unwilling to be served by me. Be sure, Gerard, that you do me a greater favour by asking, than I can do to you by conferring, a benefit. Ask——," but I had never asked even the smallest favour. I knew not why; perhaps it

was pride, perhaps it was modesty that restrained me : but so it was, that I had, and I have to this moment, an almost invincible repugnance against begging, and more than once have I suffered this feeling to stand prominently in the way of my interest. I knew my weakness, if such it can be called, and when I started upon this memorable day, to throw myself for succour at the feet of the baronet, I well remember that I ran with all my speed, singing as I went along, and shouting to the birds as they flew across my path, committing all manner of extravagancies, that I might forget the object of my journey, and be secure from the intrusion of any after-thoughts which might change the nature of my resolutions, and cause me to turn back, without accomplishing the task that I had proposed to myself.

I found the baronet in his study. He appeared to be unwontedly busy ; he was writing, and the table by which he sate was strewn with papers of various descriptions. His steward had just quitted the room ; and I could see, at a glance, that Sir Reginald's mind was not in its usual state of calm equanimity.

I said to myself, " There is something on *his* mind, and therefore I will say nothing of that which is preying upon *mine*." It needs but a feather to turn the course of a current, which is flowing out of the channel of our inclinations.

The baronet shook me cordially by the hand, "Sit down, Gerard," he said, "I'm glad, very glad to see you;—no, no, you don't interrupt me;—you have not been here for so long, that it is quite a treat when you do come to the hall; and, to tell you the truth, Gerard, you have come at a fit season, for I start to-morrow morning for Paris."

"For Paris?—then, I fear, Sir Reginald, that this will be our last meeting."

"Our last meeting!—I shall soon return."

"But, I fear, Sir Reginald, that I shall *not*."

"I don't understand you, Gerard," said the baronet,—"*whither are you going?*"

"Merely to *Sierra Leone*," I replied, with a most melancholy smile upon my face.

"To *Sierra Leone*? nonsense, my dear boy, you must not go to *Sierra Leone*; you will die there; you will be cut off in the very spring-season of your youth. Oh, Gerard, Gerard! why did you not tell me this before?"

"Sir Reginald!—my poor father has now been using every endeavour, for more than a year, to procure me a situation. He has no money, and very little interest, and it is notorious that all the professions have never been so overstocked as they are now. He has, therefore, had the utmost difficulty in procuring me even the present appointment,—an under-secretaryship at *Sierra Leone*.

What can I do? I have no other alternative than to remain a burthen upon his hands, living in a state of hopeless indolence, without any prospect before me. Sir Reginald, to speak freely, I came hither purposely to consult you; but seeing that you had much to do, and thinking that you were not in the enjoyment of your usual spirits, I had intended to have held my peace; but now that you ask me why I have not consulted you, I answer, that my father only received a notice of the appointment this very morning, and that I have taken this early opportunity to intreat your advice and assistance."

"And my advice and assistance you shall have."

"Sir Reginald, you have always been my friend; but let me beseech you not to think of me now; you have other affairs to engross you at this moment; you cannot have leisure to think of mine."

"I have, and I trust that I always shall have, leisure to do my duty."

"Sir Reginald, hear me—"

"Not now," replied the Baronet; "I have no leisure to listen to the outpourings of your modesty, —your self-sacrificing modesty I may say. Gerard, I regret exceedingly that I am obliged to quit England so soon; for your sake,—for my sake I regret

it. But the truth is this—that I have received a letter from one, who was once my friend, stating that he is on the point of death, and in an abject state of destitution. This man, whose name is Kirby, was a school-fellow of mine; he was my favourite companion,—my chosen friend,—the first to which my young heart ever clung in the sincerity of purest affection. Gerard, I have often heard you speak of school-boy friendships and associations,—in my bosom they were ever most strong. I look back upon the season of my youth as a hallowed time, and my school-house has become to me a sacred edifice. These are common feelings, perhaps; but in me they are unusually strong; for if I were to meet a beggar in the streets, whom I remembered as one of my schoolmates, methinks, that in spite of his rags and his filth, I could fold him to my bosom. But to my story.—This Leonard Kirby was the chosen friend of my bosom.

-He was the only son of an old general officer; and he had but one sister, who was several years younger than himself. With this sister I became acquainted, for I once passed my holidays at the general's; her name was Emma; she was a pretty little girl, and, as a matter of course, I fell in love with her. Most boys fall in love with one of their school-fellow's sister's. But Emma Kirby has little or nothing to do with what I am going to

tell you. Leonard, as I have said, was my friend ; and the covenant which we had formed at school we renewed upon our entrance into manhood. But I must be brief with this portion of my history.—Leonard wronged me. I cannot tell you how ; let it suffice that I trusted and was betrayed. I forgave him in my heart, but our intercourse was at an end, and to this day I have never seen him since. He left England shortly after the date of the transaction to which I have thus darkly alluded. His father was dead, and from the old man he had inherited a small property, sufficient to maintain him in a comfortable independence, but not to satisfy the insatiate appetites of one like Leonard Kirby. Abandoned, as he was, to many vicious excesses, and being an inveterate gamester, he soon managed to squander his little patrimony in the *salons* of licentious Paris. He fell ; he became leagued with evil people, and then began a career of vice, to which it is enough simply to allude. Poor Leonard ! when I think of what he was when first I knew him in his early boyhood,—so pure,—so innocent,—so ‘unspotted of the world,’—so full of lofty aspirations,—when I think of his merry voice, and his light step, and his smiling face, and of how he would come running across the play-ground, when he saw me from afar off, tossing up his head and neighing with joy, like a young colt,—when I think of these

things, Gerard, and of the creature that he now is,—so fallen,—so disgraced,—so wretched,—steeped in infamy to the very lips, and fearfully, loathsomely diseased,—I cannot help it, Gerard, though little used to weep, the tears will steal down my cheeks.

“Had I not known him in his purity,” continued the good baronet, “I should have mourned less over his degradation. But to contemplate a change so entire, and so terrible as this, is like contemplating the fall of an angel, whom we have communed with in all the splendour of its celestial brightness; and well may we weep over such a fall. But that I may bring this sad history to a conclusion, I must tell you, Gerard, that I have this morning received a letter from Leonard Kirby, acquainting me with his wretched condition,—his poverty,—his wickedness, and his approaching death. He asks nothing from me but my forgiveness, and declares that he shall die in peace if he be assured that my curse is not upon him. What else, then, Gerard, can I do, but set forth with all despatch to save, if possible, my fallen friend? For this purpose I am going to Paris, that I may, at all events, comfort his last moments, if I can do nothing to rescue him from the death. You agree with me, Gerard; I am sure that I could not well act a different part.”

“It would be impossible, for a mind so noble

as yours, to act a different part," said I, "but the world——."

"Nay; no scandal against the world," interrupted the worthy baronet. "I think that there are very few men, who would not act as I am about to act on this occasion."

I shook my head—"But the sister," said I.

"She has been living, of late years, with a maternal aunt; and I have not seen her since the days of her childhood. Leonard tells me that he has written to implore the blessing of his sister before he dies—To implore the blessing of Emma Kirby! Oh! sure I am that every morn, and every night, her prayers are offered up for the soul—the wretched soul of her fallen brother."

"But, Sir Reginald," said I, "if I err not, you are about to leave the country at a time when she most requires your presence. You are about—"

"Ah! I know what you mean," interrupted the baronet, a faint smile playing upon his handsome countenance—"I know what you mean, Gerard—I regret it. But I should be very mean were I to suffer duty to succumb to vanity and allow my interest to deter me from doing that which I know to be right. I am to receive the deputation to-morrow—had it not been for this I should have started on my journey to-day.—But how easy will it be for my friends to find another much wiser, more informed, more experienced,

more suited in every respect than myself, to represent our beautiful county in the Senate-house. They tell me that I am popular in the county. I am glad of it—I rejoice in my popularity, because I have taken no pains to procure it, and have always abstained from mixing myself up with the violent politics of the place. I am glad of this also, because it proves to me—though in thus defending others, I am forced indirectly to compliment myself—because it proves to me that popularity is not always the result of a self-compromising and truckling spirit in its possessor, and that the world will sometimes set a due value upon one, who has neither humoured its follies, nor in any way truckled to its vices. But, enough of these self-gratulations.—You shall not be forgotten, Gerard,—if anything can be done for you, in my passage through London, it shall be done; but I tell you candidly that I do not expect that I shall be able to procure a situation for you, until my return. This is now the time of the Easter recess—during which there is always, as you know, a temporary stagnation of public affairs. But you may depend upon me, and with such reliance, that you may tell your father, whenever you please, that you will have nothing to say to the under-secretaryship of *Sierra Leone*. And now, Gerard, you will excuse me; I have much to do before I go.—Here is

the last *Chronicle*; or, if you like, you may amuse yourself in the library, or go down to the stables, and get them to saddle you a horse. — Good bye.”

“ God bless you, Sir Reginald.—God bless you, my kindest of friends !”

END OF VOL. I.

DOVETON.



VOL. II.

DOVETON;

OR,

THE MAN OF MANY IMPULSES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JERNINGHAM."

"I speak
Of what I know and what we feel within."
WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
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DOVETON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER.

“ Ungrateful woman ! I have tried to stifle
An old man’s passion ! Is it not enough
That thou hast made my son a restless man,
Banished his health and half unhinged his reason ?
————— I am old
A comfortless old man.”

COLERIDGE.

On the following day I acquainted my father with the nature of the resolution that I had formed relating to the secretaryship at *Sierra Leone* ; but I said nothing of the promises made to me by Sir Reginald Euston. My father appeared to be slightly astonished ; but his countenance expressed

more of pleasure than of anger, when I told him, in a calm, but decisive voice, that my resolutions were unalterable, and that no power on earth should drive me to the shores of *Sierra Leone*.

"Have you told your mother, Gerard?" said he.

"No, sir—not yet."

"Then acquaint her, without loss of time.—As you say that your resolutions are unalterable, it would be useless for me to make an effort at directing their course into a different channel. But as I said—speak to your mother; you will find her, I think, in the drawing-room."

I went to my mother, and almost *verbatim* I repeated what I had just before advanced in the presence of my other parent.

"And what are your objections to the place?" asked my mother, in a low measured tone, which, I knew well enough, was indicative of intense anger.

"I object to it," said I, "for the same reasons that I would object to throw myself from a precipice, or leap into the bosom of the ocean—simply because I have not the impatient longings after immortality, which sent Cleombrotus headlong into the sea, and Empedocles down the crater of Vesuvius."

"I wish that you would speak more clearly in common language," said my mother.

“What I wish to observe is this, mother—that *Sierra Leone*, or the *White man’s grave*, as it is called, is no place for me. I should certainly die if I were to go there, and I very much prefer living.”

“Who could have put such stuff into your head?” asked my mother.

“I have read it in books,” said I.

“Ah! those books they have turned your brain—But you will positively not accept this appointment to *Sierra Leone*.”

“Positively not,” I replied, in a very decisive voice; “Very well, then, Gerard, you have made your election, and must abide by the consequences of that election;”—and my mother walked out of the room.

When my mother spoke very slowly and very calmly, I always knew that she was in a deadly passion. On the present occasion, a common observer would have admired the excessive tranquillity which she exhibited throughout this conference; but I knew well enough, that this stillness was only the prelude of a dreadful storm.

And the storm came; but not in my presence; it descended upon the head of my poor father.

And then succeeded a more serene season. I believe that the better feelings of my mother’s nature soon gained the ascendancy in her bosom. To speak truly, I do not think that she knew the

dangers of the place, to which she was consigning me, and that when the light, which I had been the first to throw upon her intellectual darkness, was rendered broad and clear by the further illustrations of my father, she repented that she had ever harboured a thought of sending me to the *White Man's Grave*, and soon slackened in her resentment against me for refusing to accept the appointment.

It may be asked why I said nothing to my parents concerning Sir Reginald's promises. I will tell you, reader ; but, perhaps, when I have told you, you will be little able to enter into my feelings. I had full faith in the pledges of the baronet ; and as I knew that he had both the will and the power to serve me, neither doubt nor fear entered into my breast to obscure the brightness of my prospects ; but it was my desire that the sun of my prosperity should blaze suddenly upon my father and mother, without any dawning intimations which might render its full lustre less dazzling. Or, to speak more plainly, it was my desire to *surprise* them ; and this desire so far from being an amiable feeling, as, indeed, for the most part it is, in my bosom was a very bitter one. That the absence of sympathy should produce the absence of confidence is not strange ; indeed, it is most common ; but there was something more in my reserve than the mere absence of confidence.

I had so long been treated with contumely—I had so long been looked upon as a thing of nought—both my intellectual and my moral qualifications had so long, as I thought, been undervalued,—that I now with many unworthy feelings of pride, bitterness and resentment—all the vile spawn of mortified vanity—looked forward gloatingly to the time when I might say to those who thought meanly of me, “I am not so poor a thing as you imagined me—neither so weak, so dull, nor so friendless. You see that I have done, unassisted, what none of you could do for me. I am the architect of my own fortune. The despised one is greater than you all.”

I confess that with such feelings as these I anticipated my coming triumph. It is not possible that any more unworthy, more mean, more pitiful feeling should enter into the bosom of a man. But out of such vile lusts proceeded my reserve—the profound silence that I maintained both in relation to Sir Reginald’s promises and the book I had written in secrecy.

I had finished my book, and as I reperused its pages, I looked with such an eye of self-complacency upon my labours, that I felt a hope almost amounting to a certainty, that my work, when sent forth to the world, would procure me honour, if not profit; or, at all events, set me on the high road to the temple of Riches and Fame.” Ah !

I said, "Some day or other they shall be proudest of the least cherished of their children;—some day or other they shall see that the plant which has grown up un-tended among the brambles shall rear up the loftiest head, and bear the fairest flowers in the garden.

And, after awhile, I said to myself, "But can I not do all this unaided? Can I not become great by the strength of my own energies?" And I thought that it would be a much prouder thing to work out my own triumph—no one abetting me, no one cheering me; and I asked myself, "Have I faith, and courage, and strength to accomplish this?" And my heart died within me when reflection answered, "No."

"Yet still," I thought, "I will start alone upon my pilgrimage. If I faint by the way-side, I can then cry aloud for assistance, or I can turn back, when I feel that I am too weak, and none will know of my failure. But let me start,—let me put forth my strength,—let me try my powers that I may know what they can accomplish, when greater trials call them forth;—let me try the temper of my intellect, with which, as with a sword, I am to carve my way to fortune—cutting a path where I find none." And when I had thus soliloquized, I went forth into the fields, intending calmly to sum up my resources.

When in motion I am always most sanguine

Had I remained at home I should have despaired; but now abroad in the meadows, the sun shining brightly over-head, the fresh breezes of early spring playing through my hair, as I bared my forehead to their influence, the little birds singing around me, and the trees putting forth their buds on every side, I felt full of hope and courage; and exulting in the consciousness of my strength, I cried aloud, "It is not possible that I should fail. Already do I feel myself triumphant."

My thoughts turned themselves towards the metropolis, and I resolved to start at once for London. It seemed to me that to will was to do, and, in the elevation of my spirits, I thought nothing of the means whereby this great end was to be accomplished. I was a hero, rejoicing in my might, and I condescended not to narrow details.

But when I returned to my home, I immediately began to particularize. I thought of my uncle, with whom I had once spent a vacation. He was a clergyman; he dwelt in the vicinity of London, and he was one of the most estimable men I had ever had the good fortune to be acquainted with. I knew that he would willingly receive me into his house for a few months, or, indeed, if I wished it, for as many years; and I now thought that nothing could be more easy than to take my manuscripts with me to London, and, whilst in my uncle's house, to superintend their passage through

the press, having first of all, as a matter of course, sold them to a bookseller for a considerable sum. I little doubted but that my work would succeed, and I thought that its success would make my fortune. I fancied myself now taking a dwelling-house for myself, and sending forth work after work, whilst every succeeding effort is crowned with greater glory than the last, and wealth almost incalculable is poured into my over-brimming treasury. How little is there that ever comes to pass

“ In the fantastic projects and day-dreams
Of a raw, restless boy.”

I knew not then, as I do now, that authorship, though an excellent auxiliary reliance, is most precarious as a profession, and that he who trusts to his imagination for his daily bread, has built his house upon a hill of sand, which the winds of adverse circumstances, and even the regular approaches of the waves of Time, must render every day less secure, until the edifice is wholly swept away, and desolation has fallen upon its indweller.

I wrote to my uncle, and the answer that I received was full of kindness and affection. He said that he had long been wishing to see me, and that he would make immediate preparations for my reception ; adding, “ You cannot think, my dear Gerard, how your cousin Emily is longing for

your arrival. She has not forgotten her old play-mate, and often speaks of her 'dear cousin Gerard,' wondering whether you ever think of *her*, and blessing your name, whenever it is mentioned. She is one upon whom kindness is never thrown away, and I need not tell you that she sends her best love."

"God bless thee, my sweet Cousin Emily," said I, as I folded up the letter.

Neither my father, nor my mother objected to my visit to London. The day for my departure was speedily agreed upon, and before a week had elapsed, it arrived.

On the eve of my departure, as I was making sundry necessary preparations for my journey, a servant came to the door of my apartment, and informed me that my father wished to see me. He was sitting in his little study alone, and, although the weather was very mild, there was a fire in the room, which blazed cheerfully through the dim twilight, and threw a bright, but flickering radiance upon the ceiling and the chamber-walls.

"Come hither, Gerard," said my father, "I would have some talk with you before you go."

I sate down on a little stool at my father's feet. He placed one of his hands upon my shoulder, and every now and then I felt his fingers playing with my hair. The light from the fire fell upon his face—it was a face such as we sometimes see

in the pictures of Domenichino—and I remarked that it was more than wontedly expressive of a heart overladen with sorrow.

“And so, Gerard, you are to leave us to-morrow?—You are going to your uncle Pemberton’s—a kind good man is your Uncle Pemberton—and I doubt not but that you will be very happy when you are there.”

“He has always been very kind to me,” said I; “and I love him as though he were—”

“*Your father*,” interrupted Mr. Doveton; “and well you may, when that father, my poor boy, has never been what a father should be to his son. Gerard, now tell me, truly, have you not often thought me a brute?”

There was something peculiarly touching in the tones of my father’s voice—so touching, that, when he asked me this strange question, my breast laboured with so much emotion, that all I could answer was, “My father.”

And then Mr. Doveton continued.—“My much-injured, yet most kind-hearted boy, I would not that you should go forth now, and leave your homestead, though only for a season, carrying with you an impression that you have left behind not one heart that, in thy absence, will ever turn towards thee—not one voice that will ever be lifted up in prayer for thy well-being. Oh, Ge-

rard ! you do not, you cannot know, how very much I have loved you always."

But, still, all that I could say was, " My father, my dear father !"

" Gerard, you have too much love, too much kindness, too much forbearance ;—indeed, you are too good for this cold, unloving world of ours. I have watched you—yes, my poor boy, I have watched you. Ever since I beheld, when you were quite a child, the first overflowing of your over-sensitive mind, mine eye has been often upon you when you knew it not. I have loved you in secrecy, and blessed you in silence, and communed with you from afar off. Oh, Gerard ! believe me, that always you have been the most cherished of my children."

" My father !—my kind, good father !"—and I laid my head upon the knees of my parent, and sobbed like a little child.

" Do not weep, Gerard,—do not weep ; for I cannot go on, if you do. I was about to tell you, my poor boy, that I have *feared* to love you openly. I am a poor old man, broken down in body and in mind : I have not courage to resist, nor strength to contend, and repose is the one thing needful to me. And, therefore, Gerard, being conscious of my weakness, I have never set myself up against your mother. I dare not, Ge-

rard; for I confess that I am a coward;—not amongst men, not amongst men, my boy; for them I dare meet face to face, and act as it becomes a man to act. But, with a woman, what can I do?—and the tongue of a woman, Gerard, is much sharper than the point of a sword.”

Then, after a pause, he continued.—“ More than once, my poor boy, have I spoken in your behalf, —not with authority, but with all meekness and forbearance,—entreating, and not commanding;—but I have always been answered with contumely; and if I have ever ventured to remonstrate, a gash has been made in my heart, and I have writhed beneath the torture of the incision. But I might have hardened myself to endure all this; I might have suffered much, very much, for your sake, had I thought that my sufferings would alleviate thine; but I well knew that *my* resistance would only expose *you* to greater wrongs, and that the longer I struggled in the net, the more impotent would my struggles become. Gerard, you well know your mother’s excessive love for Arthur. In this one absorbing feeling every other principle is swallowed up: to this, she sacrifices duty, justice, mercy,—everything that adorns life. She is so jealous of any encroachment upon what she deems the privileges of her favourite, that all the love that is borne towards you, she looks upon as so much injury done to Arthur; and more than once, when

I have mentioned your equal title to her affections, and have enlarged upon your good qualities, she has said to me, "This is all your venom—you do it to lower Arthur in my estimation. You hate him,—I know you do;—you hate him because he is my favourite." And then I have marked her conduct towards you; and I have seen that she has been least kind when I have been most venturesome in your behalf. And, therefore, Gerard, cruel as has been the necessity, I have been forced to love you in secret."

My heart was so full that I could not speak. My father laid his hand upon my head, and said, "Bless you, my boy! God bless you, my kind-hearted son!" Then there was a silence, which my father was the first to break.—"But you will forgive her, Gerard," said he;—"you will bear with her in patience and in meekness."

And I faltered out,—"I have borne, and will bear with her; nay, more, I do not condemn her; for how can I condemn that weakness which proceedeth from strength of love?"

Then my father said, "Gerard, you will write to me sometimes, and tell me what you are doing; and here, my boy, here is a purse for you, containing a small sum of money. I have brought you, by my indiscretions, into circumstances—"

"Oh! talk not of that, father."

"Well, my boy, in this purse you will find just

a hundred pounds ; would that I had more to give you.—Nay, take it ; I have saved it for you,—not robbed it from your brothers and sisters. It is yours ; I have been hoarding it for some years ; for you know I am almost a beggar, and that the money we live upon is your mother's."

I took the purse with some compunctions. My father bent down over me, as I sate at his feet, and kissed me upon my burning forehead. " Father ! my dear father !" I cried, " may I prove myself worthy of your love !"

And my father said, " Gerard, an angel might lavish its best affections upon you,"

And thus we communed, till night descended upon us, interchanging our mutual assurances of love.

CHAPTER II.

THE SMOULDERING FIRE.

“ The royal instinct is but smouldering in him,
It will burst out anon.”

TALFOURD'S *Ion*.

THE public conveyance, which was destined to transport me to the metropolis, passed through Merry-vale about the hour of noon. I had, therefore, time, previous to my departure, for a visit to the cottage of the Moores. It was, indeed, with a heavy heart that I set forth to bid them farewell.

My way was through the fields, and over a steep heath-covered hill at the back of Mrs. Moore's cottage. When on the brow of this hill, I saw Michael, a little lower down, culling some specimens of heath ; for, as I have said before, Michael

was a botanist. He ran to meet me, and we sate down together upon a little spot of grass which was free from the prickly furze-bushes. "And so, Gerard, you are going to leave us?" said Michael.

"For a season—only for a season; I shall come back again before long."

"We shall miss you very much," said my friend.

"And I you.—Oh, Michael! Michael! I knew not, until this moment, how very much I have loved Ella and you."

"Then why leave us?"

"Because the world beckons to me."

"And what mean you by *the world*, Gerard?—Methinks that, in a great city, you will lose sight of the world. The hills, the rivers, the woods, and the ocean,—are not these, the main parts of *the world*? Where will you see all these things in a more beautiful aspect than you see them *here*?—Not in London, Gerard. If the world be there, it is man's world—the world of art: here is the world of nature—the world made by *Him* who made *man*. But, Gerard, I can read your heart; you mean that *ambition* beckons to you."

"I do."

"And what hope you to obtain?"

"Happiness."

"And yet, Gerard, you might arrive at the same goal by a shorter and less hazardous path."

"And what is that path?"

“Content.”

“Ah ! Michael, it is easy to talk of such things ; we may read Jeremy Taylor on Contentedness, and persuade ourselves that a mean fortune is better than a good one ; but when we put our philosophy to the proof, we find that our faith is very weak, and that the theory, which is most beautiful in a book, is of all things the most impracticable in life.”

“Perhaps so,” said Michael, unwillingly.

“But, come, Michael, you talk about content : tell me now, do you know what it is ? have you ever felt it in yourself ?”

Michael turned aside his head, and replied ;
“Gerard, you banter me.”

“Nay, Michael, I but asked you a question ; I meant not to cause you pain.”

And Michael’s answer was similar to this,—
“Nor have you, Gerard, save perhaps for a moment. But I will reply to your question freely ; I *am* content, that is to say, I am happy in the enjoyment of the present. You will ask me, what are my enjoyments. Gerard, they are around me everywhere ; they are many, they are great, they are imperishable ; they are comprehended in one word, and that one word is *nature*. What if I were richer, and greater, and more honoured amongst men ? would the sky above my head be more blue, or the vernal air more delicious ? would

the trees be more green, or the flowers more fragrant? would the birds sing to me in a more cheerful strain, or would the earth display her treasures with a more liberal hand? Dear Gerard, I have the faculty of enjoyment equally with the greatest prince. I can admire as well, I can love as deeply, I can hope as strongly as a monarch. Beauty, and love, and peace, what are they, but the food of happiness? If there be beauty around me, and peace within me, and love both around and within me, how can I do otherwise than account myself as one of the most blest."

"Ah! Michael," I exclaimed, with a deep-drawn sigh, when the calm, clear voice of my friend ceased to vibrate in my ear,—"ah! Michael, Michael, this is all very *splendid nonsense*."

Michael's cheeks were dyed with crimson, as he replied, "Nay, now you are unjust."

There was a pause; I pondered a little while, and then said, "Perhaps I am."

"I am very bold," returned Michael, "to speak in such language to you. I upbraid you, though not your equal; I dare to dictate, when you are older and wiser, and more exalted than myself; when I am a poor cottager, and you ——"

"For heaven's sake, Michael, no more of this; I have wronged you grossly; I cannot bear to hear you talking thus about *my* superiority; I cannot indeed, for the very life of friendship is an

entire sense of equality; and, in God's name, Michael, what have you and I—philosophers as we are, and worshippers of nature—to do with that which is conventional? But you were right, very right, my friend; there *are* blessings scattered about the world everywhere, and he, who will, may find them. I think, Michael, that I have heard you ere now repeat a passage out of Wordsworth,—a beautiful passage, which describes the benign influence of nature upon the soul of man. How runs it, Michael?"

And Michael repeated that beautiful passage in the *Lines, written near Tintern Abbey*, *—a passage, which few can peruse, without being wiser and better for the perusal.

"Methinks, Michael," said I, when the voice of my friend was still, "that there are *some* feelings expressed in these lines, into which you cannot know how to enter."

" * ——— Nature never did betray
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings."

“ And what are they ? ”

“ I am sure, Michael, that you know nothing about ‘ evil tongues ’—

*‘ Rush judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life, ’—*

“ I know what these things are, Michael ; and if nature has not been my solace, your love has been—yours and Ella’s.”

“ True, Gerard, I have been very happy ; my happiness has been greater than my deserts ; but even we, in our sheltered nook, have known what it is to suffer :—we who have ventured little, have met with our mischances. It would be impossible, I think, for life to be one long season of summer weather.”

“ Lawrence ! ”

“ Ah ! I mean that.—He has aspired, pray God he do not fall.”

“ And dost thou never aspire, Michael ? ”

“ Sometimes,”—and the eyes of my friend were fixed upon the ground as he spoke.

“ And thou hast dreamt of greatness ? ” said I, interrogatively.

“ Do you speak of day-dreams or visions of the night ? ”

“ Of either or both, Michael ; but first tell me, what are your sleeping fancies ;—do you ever aspire in your sleep ? ”

“Sometimes I dream that I’m in the palaces of the great, and I see lofty edifices, and ornamented parks, and gardens with winding pathways and statues at every turn; and servants wait upon me in costly garments, and great men sit at my board, and I hear voices saying, ‘Welcome home again, —welcome thou long absent one.’”

“Then you do aspire, and nobly too.—Your fledgling wings take a lofty flight.”

“Nay, Gerard, these are but my dreams.”

“And what is life but a dream?—the dream of a shadow, or the shadow of a dream—*σκῆας οὐρα*, as the old Greek has it.”

Michael smiled, as he said, “Gerard, you forget that you are talking to a simple cottager who knows nothing of Greek.”

“True; but I must tell you, Michael, that Zeno, the philosopher, was wont to say, that he could tell a man by his dreams, and so say I.—If you dream of palaces, I know that you aspire to be great.”

“That is scarcely a fair conclusion,” returned Michael. “Put case, that I were to dream of blood, does it follow that I aspire to be a murderer?”

“Michael, you have never dreamt of blood—not you. But now tell me another thing: far back as your memory can reach, what see you in the dim regions of the past?”

“Do not laugh at me, Gerard, if I say that memory faintly shadows forth the same images that I behold with greater distinctness in my dreams.”

“Then you remember,” said I, eagerly, “a time when your abode was a palace, when you were waited upon by menials in rich apparel, when you walked in magnificent gardens and beheld statues wherever you turned.”

“Not exactly this,” replied Michael; “but I think that I have a dim remembrance of a noble white house, of a very large garden intersected with many walks, and of liveried servants attending upon me; but, indeed, Gerard, it is more than probable that imagination, assuming the guise of memory, has put this trick upon me, and caused the vagaries of my brain to wear the aspect of gone-by realities.”

“Do you often exercise your memory in this manner?—do you often endeavour to penetrate with a retrospective eye the obscurity of the past? Methinks, that you might remember something of the palaces wherein you dwelt before you came to this cottage at Grass-hill.”

Michael seemed astonished by the eagerness with which I advanced these questions. “I cannot see that any profit would arise from such exercises of thought,” said he. “What, if I were to perceive in the chaos and the darkness of the past a straggling ray of unexpected light, would it

make me any wiser, or better, or happier? I cannot see what I have to do with the dim past, when the bright future is before me."

"But upon your knowledge of the past, Michael, depends your ——" *future destiny*, I was about to say; but I checked myself suddenly, and continued, "Michael, on a moonless night have you ever left a lighted room to go forth into the outer darkness?"

"Oh! yes—very often," replied Michael.

"And, upon your first going forth, all objects, even the greatest and the most prominent, have been enveloped in deep obscurity,—darkness has covered all things with a pall, and your eyes have been to you as the eyes of the blind."

"Yes—this is a common thing; but when—"

"Ah! you know what I would say;—when you have been a little time in the darkness, and your eyes have strained themselves awhile, objects begin to assume gradually a distinguishable form—the greater shapes, and then the lesser become visible one after another, as though a great mist had rolled away, and at length you proceed upon your journey, seeing all things as you see them in the twilight."

"Well, Gerard."

"As with the outer eye penetrating the darkness, so is it with the eye of memory when it would pierce the obscurity of the past. Doubtless,

Michael, if you were but to concentrate your thoughts, and to search diligently in the lumber-room of your memory, shapes would arise out of chaos, and dim ideas take a palpable form."

"And if I were to remember, Gerard—what then?"

"Perhaps you might remember things which will delight you."

"And perhaps things which would distress me; the chances are equal," replied Michael.

"Then you have balanced the probabilities," said I, fixing my eyes full upon Michael's face, as I spoke.

"Gerard, you read my heart," returned Michael, grasping one of my hands as he continued in a voice tremulous with excitement,—“you read my heart; and why should it be a sealed book to my friend? Gerard, I will talk to you of these things. I know not why I have not spoken out before, unless it be, that I have scarcely ventured even to commune with my own heart upon such strange matters as these; and that I have often doubted whether I am not, in reality, the victim of a diseased imagination. Gerard, I have sometimes thought that I was not born to be a dweller in a cottage.”

"And I, Michael—I have thought so too. And Ella—ah! I see she is coming to us. Have you confided the secret of your suspicions to your sister?"

“No, Gerard.”

“Then it is time that you take counsel together. Ella, good morning; dear Ella! will you sit down beside me?”

And Ella seated herself beside me, saying sorrowfully, whilst the tears glistened in her blue eyes, and the little hand, which I held in mine, trembled. “And so, Gerard, this is to be the last time that you will sit thus, between Michael and me?”

“Nay, Ella, not the last time; that were indeed a gloomy foreboding.”

“But you will go away from us, and other friends will claim you, and you will forget the cottage children at Grass-hill.”

“Stay, Ella,” cried Michael, in an earnest tone, breaking in upon the discourse of his sister, “you do not really think that we were born to be cottage children.”

Ella made no answer. There was something in her brother's manner so different from his wonted calmness, that she looked into his face with a look of wonderment, which said plainly, “What mean you, Michael?” and then turning towards me, she said in a low voice, “what does he mean, Gerard—what does my brother mean?”

“Listen to me, Ella,” said I calmly, “and I will tell you what it is that affects him. But first of

all tell *me*, Ella, whether you have any dim remembrances floating in your mind, of any other state than your present one; do you remember any thing of your childish days, before you came to live at Grass-hill?"

"But very little," replied Ella, thoughtfully.

"And what is that little?"

"Oh! Gerard, it is so small a thing, that it is not worth mentioning; you must not smile if I tell you, nor think me a silly girl."

I shook my head, and Michael cried out in the voice of one who gasps for breath, "Speak, Ella, for God's sake, tell me what it is that you remember."

Ella looked at her brother, and the colour left her cheeks, when she saw that he was pale and trembling. But still she said, "I remember having rolled upon a cushion of crimson velvet, and having played with the tassels of gold bullion, which hung down from the corners of the pillow."

"And you do remember that," gasped Michael. —"Well, I remember the velvet cushion too. Ella, we will speak to our mother, and ask her——"

"Nay, not yet," I interrupted, in a dictatorial tone. "You should do nothing unadvisedly; abide your time, Michael; the truth will flash forth at last."

“It is strange,” said Ella, “that we should both remember the same cushions of velvet. I cannot doubt the clearness of my memory; for when I was a very little child, I used to crow over the tassels of gold.”

“Hear me, Ella—hear me, Michael. Strange truths are brought out by circumstances. You were not born to be cottage children. *Ye* think so. *I* think so, my friends; but time alone can irradiate the obscurity of your present position.—Be patient. I know that I am weak, but you shall have my weakness to assist you.”

“You are not weak,” cried Ella—“you are very strong; and you will assist us?”

“I will, Ella. Did you not once say that love makes the weakest very strong?”

“Oh! yes; I may have said so,” replied Ella, “and if I did, I spoke but the truth.”

“Then if love be strength, I am strong; and with my whole heart I will assist you.”

“Oh! kind—but let us talk no more of these things,” cried Ella; “think not of *us*,—you are about to leave us, and yet you will not talk of yourself.”

“And why should I?”

“Oh! because I like it—because you are going into the great world, and some day you will be a great man.”

“Nay, Ella—not I.”

“ Oh ! you will,—I am sure that you will.—Michael and I will glory in your fate—and we—even we, Gerard—shall be great; because we are your friends.”

“ Oh ! yes, we shall be very proud of you,” said Michael, lifting up his eyes from the ground, on which they had been some time fixed in most profound meditation.

“ And what if I should fail ?”

“ Oh ! you cannot fail,” cried Michael; “ if I were as sure as you, I—even I—would go forth into the world.”

“ *You*, Michael—why, *you* would be sure of success.”

“ And why ?”

“ Oh ! because, Michael, you carry about with you a letter of recommendation, which must make you a welcome wherever you present yourself.”

“ And what is that letter ?” asked my friend.

“ *Your face*, Michael,” said I.

And thus we communed, until it was time for me to depart ; and then I rose up and descended the hill with Michael and Ella, that I might bid adieu to their mother in the cottage.

But as we went I said to them, “ Be patient, Michael—be patient, Ella, if you desire to fathom the mystery which envelopes, as both of you suspect, the history of your early days. You are

happy, very happy, in your ignorance, perhaps your knowledge will not be so blest."

"We will, Gerard, we will be patient."

"And silent."

"Yes, save to one another."

I received the parting benediction of Mrs. Moore, and I well remember that her last words were, "Oh! Mr. Doveton, if you love us, whom you leave behind you, in this cottage, as indeed I think you do, but too fondly, forget not that I have another son abroad in the world, wandering I know not where. Think of Lawrence — my poor lost, absent Lawrence! You may see him, you may find him, Mr. Doveton. Providence may direct your footsteps to the spot where my son is dwelling, or to the paths along which he is straying. When you visit strange places think of us and of our empty chair, and be watchful."

"Oh! yes, I will be very watchful. Who knows but that I may be an instrument in the hands of providence—."

"To save him a *second time*," added Ella.

CHAPTER III.

THE BROKEN REED.

“ Life’s winter now with double smart,
Sheds frost upon my head and heart ;
And thus I stand, a lonely tree,
All bare and desolate to see,
But worse within.”

HORNE’S *Ballad of Delora*.

I STARTED upon my journey towards the metropolis, full of hope and full of regret. It was a fine clear April morning, and the country, through which I had to travel, was beautifully picturesque. Nature wore a cheerful aspect, and seemed to smile upon my expedition approvingly.

I do not think that any circumstance, worthy of note, occurred until we reached S——, where we stopped half an hour for supper, and supper to

an hungry traveller is an event of no little importance.

But I scarcely think that I should have recorded this event, had it not been productive of another, which being of infinite importance to my history, I shall lay before the reader in this chapter.

I had alighted from my seat upon the roof of the coach, and following the example of my fellow travellers, I had taken up my position at the supper-table, where I was devouring with all possible despatch rather more than a modicum of cold fowl, with sundry slices of ham to embellish it, when I heard the rattling of wheels, accompanied by the loud smacking of whips, and a chaise with four posters drew up before the door of the hotel. And then there was a ringing of bells, — “two pair of horses and chaise out directly,” was given in a fine barytone voice by the head-waiter, and immediately afterwards the same voice sinking down into a *soprano*, said, “Will you please, Sir, to alight for a moment, whilst the horses are being put to?”—a question which the traveller must have thought very superfluous, as he could not easily have transferred himself from one chaise to another, without performing the operation of ‘alighting.’

The gentleman, as it appears, did alight; and then there was a scene of confusion and dismay, for the post-boys, who had driven the last stage,

had applied for payment, and the traveller had discovered that he had not a single coin of any kind at that moment in his immediate possession.

Hearing the noise, my curiosity, I being then but a raw traveller, prevailed over my appetite, and I quitted the supper-room, that I might become a witness of the strange uproar in the hall. The post-boys were loud, imperative, and insolent. The waiters shrugged their shoulders; the landlord said that it was "very strange and very unfortunate," at the same time giving orders, in an under-key, that the horses should be taken back to the stable, whilst I looked on with a beating heart, little thinking, as did all the denizens of the hotel, that the moneyless traveller was an impostor.

I must describe the individual as I saw him then. He was about forty years of age; he was tall; and his person was enveloped in the ample foldings of a black cloak, fastened at his breast by a large clasp, which, from its brightness, I took to be of jet, and surmounted by a deep cape of the richest black velvet. He wore a high-crowned hat, with a brim of more than ordinary dimensions; and this was all of his apparel that I could see. But his face—oh! I never beheld a face with such a touching expression of utter hopelessness as the traveller's countenance betrayed. It haunted me for days after. It was a thin, pale face, almost

perfectly elliptical, and the features thereof were small and delicate, almost to effeminacy, saving the eyes, which were dark and full, shaded with long black lashes, and peculiarly soft in their expression. It was, indeed, in its mere lineaments, a very beautiful face; but it was that touching look of meek despondency, that calm aspect of patient sorrow, which appealed irresistibly to my heart, and caused me both to pity and to love at first sight the afflicted stranger.

And there he stood in the centre of an insolent crowd of menials, suspected, pointed at, derided. He appeared to be quite lost, quite paralyzed by the strangeness of his situation; as helpless and as destitute of resources as an infant in this trying position. He looked around him, and he saw nothing but strange, sneering faces; then he lowered his eyes, and his lips trembled, and his whole countenance worked convulsively; and then he drew the folds of his cloak more closely around him, and at length said in a voice of despair, raising his eyes as he spoke, "What am I to do?"

There cannot possibly be conceived any language more expressive of entire hopelessness than this. It is the language which the Greek tragedian puts into the mouths of his desolate mourners; *Τι δρᾶσω*; "What shall I do?"

I. could not resist this appeal. There was something so plaintive in the voice, and so de-

sponding in the aspect of the speaker ; something so very wretched in his whole appearance, and so truly pitiable in the words he had uttered, that my heart was touched, my sympathies were awakened, and every generous impulse of my soul was suddenly called into action. I pitied, I loved the stranger ; I saw that he was a man of sorrows, and I loved him for the meekness and the patience that I could read in his pale face. “ And is this man,” I asked myself, “ for the want of a few vile coins, to be insulted by every groom in the yard, every waiter and tapster in the house ? ”

I could not restrain my impulses. It was the one desire of my soul to rescue the afflicted stranger ; no scruples of delicacy, no conventional misgivings interposed to chill the ardour of my emotions. I did not pause, I did not hesitate, that I might weigh nice distinctions ; but I burst through the crowd of astonished menials, and laying my hand upon the arm of the stranger, I cried out in an eager, but tremulous voice, “ Can I help you, Sir ?—can I aid you in this embarrassment ? ”

And then, not waiting for an answer from the stranger, I turned round, and assuming my manliest deportment, I addressed myself to the unfortunate postilions, saying, “ What is it that you require from this gentleman ? ”

“ Six-and-thirty shillings for the posting, Sir,—beside—— ”

“The value of your own services,” said I, interrupting the spokesman.—“Now just have the goodness to be quiet, and you shall have whatever you demand.”

And then I addressed myself again to the traveller, in whose countenance wonderment was now mingled with despondency, and I said to him, “Come aside, Sir, and leave these importunate grooms.”

The stranger appeared scarcely to comprehend me ; but following my example rather than my instructions, he walked with me to the further end of the passage, leaving landlord, waiters, and post-boy, staring at one another with expressions of countenance in which astonishment was mingled with distrust.

“You will excuse my frankness I hope, Sir,” said I ; “but being assured that there is some mistake here, I venture to offer my assistance. Can I help you, Sir?—I am longing to help you.”

“Can you tell me what I am to do ?” said the stranger in a low, heart-broken voice. “Every moment of delay is a torture to me ; yet I do not know what is to be done.”

“Oh ! take my purse, Sir,—I have plenty of money,” and I held out the cash as I spoke.

But the stranger extended not his hand. He looked at me, and his eyes glistened with tears,

and I heard him say in an under tone, "She will die ; and I shall not be in time."

"Oh ! let me implore you to take this," I exclaimed, again extending my purse. "It is true that I am a stranger and a boy ; but do not, therefore, despise my assistance."

There was an earnestness in my manner, and a sincerity in the tones of my voice, which found their way to the stranger's heart. "Ah !" said he ; "it is only in boyhood that we are thus generous ;" and then he sighed.

"But may I not help you ?"

"You may, my young friend—you may. I see that your assurances are genuine ;—you wish to serve me ;—I read it in your face : but what a strange person you must think me—to set out upon my journey without money, and *such* a journey. God grant that I may not be too late after all !"

"Shall I pay the post-boys, and order fresh horses ?"

"Yes—do—I am not used to these things ; but stay, first tell me your name."

"Gerard Doveton."

"And your address ?"

"Oh ! I will give it to you presently, Sir ; but first of all let me order your horses, that no time may be lost."

“ Ah ! yes I must lose no time, or my poor mother will be dead.”

“ And he is on his way to see a dying mother,” thought I, as I ran with all speed along the entrance passage of the hotel, to settle the claims of the post-boys, and to order out a relay of horses.

I heard the landlord say to the head-waiter—
“ A job chaise and no luggage—don’t like the looks of that at all.”

And will you not order out the horses, then ?” said I.

“ Not if the *gentleman* (laying an emphasis on the word) have no money ; I can’t afford it, Sir ;” and the landlord would have added more, had I not interrupted him, exclaiming,

“ For God’s sake be quick with the horses ! I have money—money in abundance, and I will pay you for them. In mercy’s name let me intreat you to lose no time.”

The landlord smiled, and there was that in his face which said plainly enough, “ You are a dupe ;” but he ordered out the horses, and then turning towards me, he said, “ You are a generous young gentleman ; may you never repent of your generosity.”

I rejoined the stranger, whom I found leaning against one of the pillars of a portico in front of

the hotel. It was a beautiful starry night, and the traveller was standing bare-headed ; his dark hair flung back from off his brows, gazing with an upturned face at the serene heaven above him. " And perhaps," I heard him say in a voice of anguish,—“ perhaps she has joined them already in their bright habitations *there*.”

When he beheld me again standing beside him, the stranger passed his hand athwart his face, as though he were endeavouring to dispel the wild fancies which were crowding upon his brain ; and then with a calmer aspect, he bent his eyes upon me, and said,—“ I hope that you do not think me an impostor as do these people of the hotel.”

“ An impostor ! God forbid that I should think so. Oh ! Sir, I read faces too well, young as I am, to think you an impostor.”

“ And yet you might often be deceived,” said the stranger sorrowfully ; and then he added,—“ I forgive these people—without money, without papers, without luggage, without even a card of address—coming to a strange place in a hack-chaise, which I cannot pay for ; 'tis not wonderful that the people should suspect me.”

“ But your face,—your appearance,—your voice—”

“ Ah !” returned the stranger ; “ you are young and credulous,—many an arrant rogue has had a better face,—a finer cloak, and a meeker voice

than mine. But I thank you for judging thus kindly of me. You are a generous,—a noble-hearted youth. With appearances sadly against me, suspected by those who are older and have more knowledge of the world, though perhaps not of the *heart*, than yourself,—an entire stranger as I am, in a strange place, friendless and alone, you come forward and offer me your purse without even asking my name.”

I was silent, and the traveller continued. “The time may come when I shall be able to repay you for the great service you have done me to-day. I am neither poor, nor unknown, nor unrespected. It is probable that, had I mentioned my name to these people, who now take me for a cheat, I should have met with the most abject servility in the place of derision and insult,—that is to say, if they had given credit to my story, which, as I have no means of proving its veracity, these suspicious worldlings might not have done, any more than they now believe me to be a gentleman.”

“With all their knowledge of the world, they are fools,” said I.

The stranger smiled, and said,—“God grant that you may abide in your present faith.”

Knowing that there was but brief time allowed me for prolonging this conversation, I now took out my pocket-book from one of my inner garments, and counting out bank-notes to the amount

of thirty pounds, I put them into the stranger's hand. "But your address," said he,—“give me your address.”

I wrote my Uncle Pemberton's address upon a leaf, which I tore out of my pocket-book. The stranger read it, and folded it carefully up; and then said to me—“But *mine*, my young benefactor.—It is strange that you should not have asked my name and history, before you advanced this loan.”

“I desire to know neither the one nor the other,” said I,—“if *you* desire to keep them secret. Your *face* is sufficient security for the repayment of this money!”

“You are too full of faith, too credulous,” replied the stranger; “but you shall know both my name and the history of my misadventures. My name is *Anstruther*, and I live at Charlton Abbey, about three miles from M——, in H——shire.”

He then proceeded to inform me that he was on his way to Bath, to visit a dying mother, of whose sudden illness he had only gained intelligence that morning—that he had started from the Abbey in his own travelling carriage, taking with him his valet, an old and confidential servant—that by the carelessness of the postillions he had been overturned, two stages before S——, by which accident his carriage was fractured, and his

servant dangerously injured—that he had left his valet behind at an inn, and proceeded in a post-chaise, forgetting, in the lethargy of grief which enveloped him, to ask his servant who was acting as pay-master of the journey, for the travelling money with which they had started;—that at the last posting-house he had found two sovereigns in his waistcoat pocket, with which he had paid for the horses that had drawn him there; and that it was not until his arrival at S——, that he had discovered, to his dismay, that he was pennyless. “I have been so long unused,” concluded Mr. Anstruther, “to act for myself in these petty affairs, that when I am thrown upon my own resources, I am actually as helpless as a child. All the minor details of business are indeed mysteries to me; and I am as unfit to prosecute a journey by myself as the veriest infant from the nursery. But what is this to you, my young friend? It now only remains for me to thank you. Be sure that you shall hear from me soon; we will be friends. I want a friend, for I am almost alone in the world.”—And as he said this, I could see, by the light which streamed from an over-hanging lamp, that every muscle of the traveller’s face was convulsed, and that a large solitary tear was rolling down his cheek on either side.

He raised his hand to his face, and dashed away the tear; then he continued, in a broken voice—

“ ’Tis a dangerous thing to love deeply. Have you a father, my young friend ?”

I replied in the affirmative, and the traveller returned, “ Ah ! and I once had *children*.” His voice faltered so much that the last word was scarcely audible. Then, after a brief pause, he continued, in a calmer tone, as though he were communing with himself—“ And yet ’tis a proud fate to die in the splendour of one’s innocence.”

And then the traveller, throwing back his cloak, laid one hand upon my shoulder, whilst with the other he pointed upwards to the starry heaven, and said, in a deep solemn voice, the tones of which I shall ever remember, “ They are there—all three !”

Then, with a more rapid utterance, he proceeded thus—“ They are *all* there—methinks I see them looking down upon me, like cherubim—’tis very dangerous, believe me, to love over-much—”

“ Yet, ’tis pleasant—”

“ Ah ! but death comes, and then the soul is made dark for ever—”

Then suddenly checking himself, he said, “ I have talked to you this night, as I have not talked for many years, and yet you stand before me a stranger.”

There was a brief silence, which Mr. Anstruther

was the first to break. "My young friend," he asked,—“how old are you?”

“Eighteen.”

“Eighteen,” the traveller muttered to himself—
“*Eighteen*,—the age of my first-born.”

I was beginning to think that the intellect of my new friend was slightly disordered by much suffering; for there was a strangeness, indeed a wildness in his manner and his aspect, whilst speaking of his children in heaven, which could not have failed to inspire a looker-on with this suspicion—when one of the inn-waiters came up to tell me that the coach by which I came was about to start, and that the driver was already on the box.

“Farewell then, Mr. Anstruther,” I exclaimed, “God grant that when you arrive at your journey’s end, you may be spared the trial you anticipate.”

“Bless you—God bless you!”—cried Anstruther, grasping me very fervently by the hand,—“my blessings go with thee through the wide world,” and in a minute I was rattling along the streets of S——, behind four rapid-going horses.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAN OF IMPULSE, AND THE MAN OF SENSE.

“ Within the surface of the fleeting river,
The wrinkled image of the city lay
Immoveably unquiet ”—

SHELLEY.

“ I have fed
Perhaps too much upon the lotos-fruits
Imagination yields, fruits which unfit
The palate for the more substantial food
Of our own land—reality.”

LONDON.

DAY was just beginning to dawn as we entered the great metropolis. “ An eager and a nipping air,” was abroad, and I felt as though I would willingly have exchanged my then passive mode of locomotion, for an active one, which might have imparted some warmth to the cold blood that was stagnating in my veins. Yet, in spite of my uneasy condition, I could not help contemplating the silent city—its deserted streets, and its smokeless

houses, with certain poetical transports of delight, and I repeated, time after time, to myself, this passage from one of Wordsworth's sonnets,

"The city now does like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning,"

and looking upon all things around me with the eye of a philosopher and a poet, I soon forgot that the air was cold, and that my limbs were almost benumbed.

As we passed the park-gates, I, in my ignorance, said to the coachman, "Do we go over Westminster bridge?"

The man smiled, and replied in the negative. I was disappointed, for I had often desired to behold the effect which Wordsworth has described in that noble sonnet "Composed upon Westminster Bridge," from which I have just quoted a passage.

But when we had reached Charing Cross, the coachman, pointing with his whip said, "That, Sir, is the way to the bridge?"

"Oh! then I will alight here," said I, unable to resist the temptation; "you will take my luggage on to the coach-office, and I will call for it in the course of the morning."

The driver pulled up his horses, and I gave him half-a-crown—more than he was entitled to, it is true; but boys always give double, thinking that

it makes them look like men; besides, I was so glad to quit the vehicle, upon which I had travelled nearly two hundred miles, that I believe, in the plenitude of my joy and gratitude, I would have given him a guinea, had he asked it.

“And this is just the time,” said I to myself, as I hurried past Whitehall, “the very hour that the poet has described—and such a morning too!—the sun rising gloriously.—Oh! yes, it will be a noble sight.”

Nor was I disappointed. I stood upon the bridge, and looking eastward, I leaned over its balustrades, in a mood of intense admiration. Red, bright, and unclouded, rose the sun over the great city, bathing houses and churches and bridges in its light; and vessels with their bare masts lay quietly by the river side, and every here and there was a light in a chamber window, which told that its inmate was asleep. There was no bustle in the streets, no stir upon the waters; the mighty Babel was in profound repose, like a Leviathan taking its rest, and there was something majestic and awful in the stillness, which filled my breast with solemn emotion, and disquieted me with a strange sense of mingled adoration and fear. The tall chimnies of the manufacturer sent forth no smoke; the vanes upon the church spires glittered, but no sound issued from their belfries; the bridges spanned the river with their arches, but the mul-

itude traversed them not; and the river flowed tranquilly on, "gliding at his own sweet will," neither ruffled by a single oar, nor cloven by a single prow.

And there I stood leaning over the bridge, and repeating Wordsworth's magnificent sonnet. Oh! never at any time have I felt the truthfulness of this great master's poetry more deeply than I did at the hour, of which I am now writing;

" Silent, bare
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky!
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air ;"—

and then, when I came to the two last lines, my eyes filled with tears, and my voice faltered, and my heart was full of emotion—

*" Dear God, the very houses seem asleep,
And all that mighty heart is lying still."*

How beautiful! I cannot, even now, that the enthusiasm of my boyhood is somewhat tempered by years, repeat the noble words of this poem, with a still heart and a tearless eye, and a voice unbroken by emotion. But then, in my youth's summer, in all the freshness of my young feelings, the warmth of my young heart, susceptible even to an intensity that was painful—with a soul, which had long sustained itself upon the food of

love and admiration, it is not strange that with such a scene before my eyes, and such poetry vibrating in my ears, I should have been seized with a transport of excitement, absorbing every faculty of soul and sense, and making me like one of the abstracted.

But anon, I felt a hand upon my shoulder, and I heard a voice, whose tones were familiar to me though I had not listened to them for years. I thought that I could not be in error,—those accents, those words, they were stamped with an individuality, which it were quite impossible that I should mistake. “If Gerard Doveton has no desire to continue his dreams in the lap of old Father Thames, I would recommend him to quit his dangerous position upon the parapet of Westminster Bridge.”

It was actually my old friend Smith. “And what has brought you here?” I exclaimed; at the same time grasping him very cordially by the hand, and leaping down from my seat upon the parapet, for I was quite over-joyed to see my old school-fellow and adviser.

“And may I not ask the same question,” replied Smith, “and with every probability of receiving a more whimsical answer than I give.”

“Very likely—I was always whimsical—and I am just as strange a creature as ever.”

“So I perceive—but I will satisfy your cu-

riosity without delay. This happens to be Easter vacation, and therefore, I am absent from the University."

"Ay—but what brings you out at such an early hour when every body else is in bed?"

"Inclination," replied Smith. "I am always an early riser; but in London more early than in the country; for the atmosphere of a city is purer in the morning than it is later in the day; besides, the streets are less crowded, there is nothing to impede my progress, and I incur no risk of being demolished by carts, coaches, and brewers' drays. I have been as far as the Elephant and Castle, and I am now on my way home to Gower Street."

"Well," said I, "you seem to have good reasons for indulging in *your* morning walks."

"Yes—besides, I am 'reading for honours,' and I fag all through the middle of the day. The morning I devote to exercise—the evening to society, and by thus dividing my time, I find that I can study to my heart's content, without in any way injuring my health."

"For my part I can do most at night," said I, "the 'midnight oil' for me."

"Bad—very bad," said Smith, "*it makes one dream*; and there's nothing in the world so bad for the health as dreaming. Dreams, too, unsettle the mind—never read at night, Doveton; take my

advice and study in the morning—but now tell me what brought you here.”

I satisfied the curiosity of my friend, and when I had done so, he at first seemed inclined to laugh, but his face presently assumed a graver aspect, and he said to me, “Do you know, Doveton, that you have done a very silly thing?”

“If I have, then it is your fault; for you it was who told me to read Wordsworth.”

“That’s too good: you might say, with as much truth, that it’s Mr. Wordsworth’s fault for writing the sonnet. But let me advise you, never again to part company from your luggage.”

“My luggage!—it’s all safe. Do you think that my luggage is in jeopardy?”

“Certainly I do;—where is it to be left?”

“At the coach-office.”

“*What* coach-office, Doveton?”

This was a question which I could not answer. I must have looked very silly, as I stammered out, “Why, I don’t know.”

“Then let me advise you to ascertain, without delay. Come, Doveton, I will give you my assistance; for, without it, the further you go, the more inextricably will you involve yourself in difficulties. By what coach did you come from Merry-vale?”

I thought a little, and then replied: “By the Independent—no, by the Auxiliary—or else by the Defiance, or the Quicksilver.”

“ Or the Times, or the Red Rover, or the Celebrity ;” said Smith. “ You are very perspicuous in your explanation, and seem, upon the whole, my dear fellow, to know very much about the business. However, I will soon discover for you. Was it a mail ?”

“ No, I don’t think so ; and yet I rather think that it was.”

“ Very clear, certainly,” observed Smith ; “ you do think so, and yet you don’t. But tell me, where did you sit ?”

“ Behind the coachman.”

“ You could not easily have sate *before* him, unless you had ridden postilion,” returned Smith ;—
“ but in front, or at the back of the coach ?”

“ In front.”

“ And were there any passengers behind ?”

“ Yes, the guard.”

“ And no one else ?”

“ I really don’t know ; I did not trouble myself to inquire ; and I was looking forward all the way.”

“ But now tell me,” cried Smith, retaining his patience with a constancy that was truly admirable, “ do you remember where they stowed your luggage ?”

“ Yes,” said I ; “ the guard told me that he had put it in the *hind-boot*.”

“ Then,” cried Smith, “ you didn’t come by the

mail;" and having established this point, he continued to interrogate me concerning the line of road we had travelled, the time of starting, the place we had supped at, and sundry other details of this kind; and after a tedious cross-examination, he contrived to discover, from my answers, which were not very explicit, what coach it was that had transported me to the metropolis. This was the process, which Smith called "putting two and two together;" an operation which, at that period of my life, I was very little competent to perform.

But Smith was right; and he conducted me to the coach-office where my luggage actually was—at least, a portion of it; for here I discovered another instance of Smith's sagacity, some dishonest person having appropriated to himself my hat-box and a little *sac-de-nuit*, in which was a single change of linen, and—wretch that I was—*my manuscripts!*

I was horror-struck. This was an irreparable loss. If they had taken all my money and my clothes, I might have borne the privation with philosophy; but, to take my manuscripts!—is it possible to conceive any more grievous calamity befalling a young author? I turned quite sick,—my heart died within me, and my head swam dizzily round. It was like the bursting of a great crucible at the very moment that the alchemist

sees within it the realization of a life's dreams : and this was I now destined to endure.

Smith saw me turn deadly pale, and felt me lean heavily against him ; for I could scarcely support myself in this extremity, so oppressive was the sensation of sickness that came over me when I was made acquainted with the extent of my loss.

" What ails you—are you ill ?" asked Smith.

" My *sac-de-nuit*," was all that I could answer.

" Could not have held much," said Smith, laconically, finishing the sentence that I had commenced.

" Oh, yes !—it was full of manuscripts ; the stores of a whole life were garnered in those pages."

" *Manuscripts* !—of your own composition ?"

" Yes," said I.

" Never mind, then," cried Smith ; " I'll answer for it, that they were not worth much, if you wrote them all yourself, Doveton."

" Oh ! you don't know ; there were nine hundred pages at least. What am I to do ?"

" The loss is a gain, depend upon it," replied Smith ; " they could not have stolen anything more useless than the manuscripts of a boy of eighteen."

" So you think, but *I* don't ; at all events, they were the best I had got."

“ As the Irishman said of his bad cough ;—but, seriously, does the loss afflict you ? ”

“ Grievously ! ”

“ Do you value your manuscripts at ten shillings ? ” asked Smith.

“ Now you are laughing at me !—I would not have lost them for ten times ten pounds. ”

“ Which is much more than they are ever likely to fetch.—But here, you, sir, ” calling to a porter, who was loitering in the coach-yard : “ This gentleman has lost a little carpet-bag, and he will give you half-a-guinea to find it. ”

The man touched his hat, promising to use his best endeavours, whilst Smith said to me, in an under-tone, “ Ten to one, that he has got it himself : it is a common trick of these fellows to secrete small parcels, that they may get the rewards that are offered for them. ”

This assurance—for I always believed Smith,—reanimated my drooping spirits ; and saying that I would call again on the following day to inquire after my lost property, I ordered a coach, and having caused the remainder of my luggage to be stowed therein, I was about to enter the vehicle, when Smith said to me, “ Whither are you going ? ”

“ Wherever you like, ” said I.

“ Your uncle lives at S—— ; does he not ? You had better, I think, breakfast in town, and then go down to S—— by a stage. Are you hungry ? ”

“ I was,” said I, “ before I discovered the loss of my *sac*.”

“ Suppose that we breakfast together ?”

“ I shall be delighted.”

“ Well, then,” said Smith ; “ we will leave your luggage at the office where the S—— coaches start from, taking care to *book* all your parcels, which will cost you six-pence for the three ; and having done this, we will go and breakfast at the Tavistock.”

“ And where is that ?”

“ In Covent Garden,—the market is worth seeing, particularly to-day ; Doveton ;” and we started off for the S—— coach-office.

As we were breakfasting, I told Smith what had happened to me upon my journey, making a very excellent story of my adventure with the *soi-disant* Anstruther, and I concluded by asking my companion his opinion of the whole transaction.

“ I think,” said Smith, “ that you have been much more generous than discreet. You will never see your money again.”

I made a point of always confiding in Smith’s sagacity, but I must confess, that on the present occasion my faith tottered no little, and that I answered, with a sceptic smile, “ You don’t really think so, do you ?”

“ Yes,” said Smith ; “ I think that he has duped you.”

"But he has given me his name and address."

"Nothing more easy," returned Smith, "when there are so many names in the blue book."

"But his manners—and his appearance—and his voice,—I am quite sure that he is a gentleman."

"Do you read the newspapers?" asked Smith.

"Never."

"I thought not, or you would have seen that young gentlemen of 'fashionable exterior, and remarkably prepossessing appearance,' are brought up every day in the week, except Sunday, before the police magistrates for swindling."

"Nay, now, you *are* laughing, at me," said I.

"Not at all," said Smith; "but I'll presently convince you,—here, waiter, bring me the *Chronicle*."

The paper was brought, and Smith spread it out before him. "I thought I should find a case in point," said he.

And Smith read.—"Marlborough-street.—Yesterday morning, a fashionably drest young man, who gave his name Charles Amelius Somerset, with a mild, intelligent countenance, and a very fine head of light-brown hair, was brought before the sitting magistrate, charged with committing a fraud of a novel and unprecedented description."

"Well," said I, "that may be all very true; but I would stake my existence upon the honesty

of Mr. Anstruther. Besides, it is very improbable——”

“Oh! nothing is improbable, Doveton;—read the Police Reports, and you’ll think nothing improbable; things happen every day in London that would be condemned as monstrous and unnatural, if they were met with in the pages of a novel.”

“We shall see, Smith. Truth is the daughter of time; I don’t tremble for my money.”

“I would not give you five per cent. for your chance.”

“Nor I take ninety.”

“What name did the stranger give you,” asked Smith.

“*Anstruther*; and he said that he lived at Charlton Abbey, near M——, in H——shire.”

“And there is a Mr. Anstruther of Charlton Abbey in H——shire. There, you may see it in the Court Guide.—London residence, Park-street, Grosvenor Square; but I don’t think that *you* have seen him.”

“Ah! well,” I said, with a deep sigh, — “if I *am* duped, I will burn my Lavater.”

CHAPTER V.

RELIGION AND THE DOMESTIC CHARITIES.

“ The calm delights
Of unambitious piety he chose,
And learning’s solid dignity.”

WORDSWORTH.

My uncle Pemberton was a clergyman. He had the living of a large parish just six miles distant from the metropolis. He was a widower, and he had one child,—‘one little ewe lamb,’—MY COUSIN EMILY.

It would not be easy to conceive a more estimable character than my uncle’s. A minister of the Church of England, his zeal stood not in the way of his toleration; he was zealous without being a zealot; and his charity was so closely interwoven

with his faith, that the deeper his knowledge, and the stronger his conviction, of the truths of the gospel became, the more necessity did he see for conciliation and forbearance, the more kind, and exculpatory, and forgiving towards others was this lowly-minded servant of Christ. Not his was the arrogant, Pharisaical creed, which, assuming all perfection to itself, condemns with a wide-spreading condemnation the myriads not within its little pale, and seems by the constancy of its self-gratulations to glory in rather than to weep over its exclusiveness. Not his the presumptuous egotism which sees no signs of grace, but in itself; that stern, censorious morality, which forgetteth the commandment, "*Judge not.*" My uncle walked erectly himself, but he had a heart to pity, and a hand to raise, and a voice to comfort, the fallen. He subjected not the lives of other men to the severe standard of rectitude to which he conformed his own, but seeking for good in everything, and rejoicing wherever he found it, he endeavoured to work out the redemption of his fellow-creatures more by filling their hearts with peace than by striking terror into their souls,—more by inviting them to hope than by driving them into despair,—more by dwelling upon the glory, and the infinite bliss of the forgiven, than by descanting upon the torments of the condemned. His was indeed a religion of love; his heart overflowed with sympathy; and

in truth may it be written of him, as it has been written of another good man*, that "he never conversed with a fellow-creature without feeling a wish to do him good."

Simple in his manners, condescending to all, calm, contemplative, and yet cheerful, an unkind word or a harsh tone, never escaped from this good man's lips. He was so little selfish, that in the joys and sorrows of those around him, he always forgot his own; making it the study of his life to strike sunshine into the hearts of the afflicted, to heal the sick, to enrich the poor, and to assist the heavy-laden upon their journey, his existence was one continued scene of good deeds and sanctifying charities. Courted by the rich, and almost worshipped by the poor, the constant theme of praise and admiration as he was, no particle of pride ever entered into his nature; no feelings of self-congratulation brought a smile of triumph to his lips. He asked, he desired no extraneous rewards. To do good—for good's sake, was the full extent of his ambition, and if he were rewarded by the prayers and the blessings of the poor, filling his soul with serene delight, there was no self-complacency in his enjoyment, for he only regarded himself as an instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and when others gave thanks

• David Hartley.

to him, he offered up his thanksgivings to God.

My uncle Pemberton was wise as he was good ; he might have adorned, had it so pleased him, the foremost ranks of philosophical literature. " He counted it not profaneness to be polished with human reading," nor did he think that the writings of the heathen philosophers ought to be sealed books to a Christian divine. Indeed, he esteemed the dialogues of Plato next in order to the sacred scriptures, and he was wont to say that many of the first principles of Christianity are discernible in the doctrines of Socrates. Neither did he despise the lighter literature of the day ; for he very much delighted in poetry, especially when interwoven with sound philosophy, as in the writings of William Wordsworth ; and even the pages of the novelist were frequently resorted to by my uncle, for he was of opinion, that no work, which increases our knowledge of the human heart, and awakens kindly emotions and generous sympathies in our breasts, can fail of doing good to the reader. The human heart, indeed, to Mr. Pemberton was a volume which he delighted to study, and although, perhaps, the kindliness of his nature caused him to dwell upon and to analyze the virtues more intently than the vices of his fellows, it may well be said that his knowledge of humanity was consummate ; for, after all, though a Rochefoucault

or a Byron, or a Crabbe, may teach a different lesson, that philosophy, which is the most cheerful, is at the same time the most true, and there is more wisdom, seeing that good and evil are commingled in the hearts of men, to look upon the good as a covering to the evil, than to regard the evil as the annihilator of the good. "The heart of man," said my uncle Pemberton, "is as a garden, where noxious weeds are intermixed with the sweetest flowers; and it is better to admire the garden for the sake of the flowers, than to condemn it because of the weeds. We should forgive the frowardness of our neighbour's heart for the slender vein of goodness that runs through it, even as God would have spared Sodom for the sake of ten just men."

My uncle began life in the army; at the age of sixteen he was a young cornet of horse; and he had followed the profession of arms for a period of nearly five years, when he abandoned the camp for the temple, at the solicitation of an aged mother, whose desire it was to behold her son a minister of the gospel before she died. Had it not been for this, Mr. Pemberton's name might have adorned the military annals of the country; for, like David Hartley, "he considered the moral end of our creation to consist in the performance of the duties of life attached to each particular station, to which all other considerations ought to

be inferior and subordinate, and consequently, that the rule of life consists in training and adapting our faculties, through the means of moral habits and associations to that end." * Had he continued to carry arms in the service of his king, certain am I, that he would have exemplified the character of the "happy warrior," which Wordsworth has so nobly portrayed in a poem, which ought to be stamped upon every soldier's memory in characters never to be effaced. The same good man would my uncle have been in the barrack-room, that he was at the altar, equally obedient unto God, and equally full of love towards men. No adverse circumstances could have shaken the integrity, nor any evil associations defiled the purity, of his mind. "Crowned with inward glory," he might have walked through the dark places of the world, and never once dashed his foot against a stone.

It is a pleasant task to analyse a good man's character, and to write of a good man's deeds. And pleasant too is it, though in a less elevated degree, to portray even the outward peculiarities of one so worthy to be remembered—the external aspect of the temple, where so much virtue was enshrined. Imagine then, reader, a tall, well-built man, about five and forty years of age, with

* See the *Life of Hartley*, appended to his *Works*.

a face, which it would be almost impossible to look upon without loving its possessor. He had a high smooth forehead, "profound though not severe," and the little hair, that surmounted it, was of a silvery grey colour, which had once, perhaps, been light brown; for such would have been most in harmony with the fair complexion, and the mild grey eyes and the meek intelligence of my uncle's face. Extreme simplicity, resulting from the exquisite adaptation of all its parts to one another, gave a sublime aspect to his countenance, and saved his features; which were more remarkable for grace and delicacy than for strength, from the feebleness which often proceeds from a want of decision, in their outlines. Gentleness and benignity, and a serene thoughtfulness were written in legible characters upon a face, which was, "readable as an open book;" and if ever there were a loveable expression of countenance, it was that of my uncle, when he smiled. It was altogether a saint-like face, and it was the face of a saint-like man — of one whom Caspar Lavater would have called an *apostolical* man—a man high above his fellows, as the apostles were, at the dawn of Christianity.

But my cousin Emily—what shall I say of *her*? My beautiful little cousin, with her laughing eyes, and her rosy lips, which had a smile on them all day long. Oh! how palpably her image rises up

before me, as I beheld her, at the time of which I am now writing, in all the grace and purity of extreme youth, full of life, and love, and cheerfulness, the gladdest spirit that ever moved along the earth, shedding sunshine all around her, and making music wherever she went. She was barely thirteen years of age, and the prettiest little creature in the world, with her nut-brown hair, soft, glossy and profuse, streaming adown her back and clustering over her shoulders, with her large dark grey eyes, lucid with love and merriment, and her dimpling blushing oval cheeks, which invited you every moment to kiss them, and her full lips which pouted, when you did, with an expression of mock gravity, which was at beautiful discord with the mirth swimming in her eyes, though she would endeavour with all her might to frown, and to look angry—a most abortive endeavour, always,

For lo! directly after
It bubbled into laughter.

and my cousin Emily would cry out “ You naughty man ! ” and shaking her bright ringlets, run away with the swiftness of a fawn, her little feet gliding along as though they scarcely touched the ground—my playful, dear cousin Emily!

She was the sweetest tempered creature in the

world, and was never so happy as when she was doing some little act of kindness towards another. To hear you express a wish was sufficient; off she would run up-stairs, or down-stairs, for a book, across the lawn for a flower, or into the garden for a handful of fruit, singing all the way as she went like a bird, and laughing, when you told her upon her return, that she was "a dear, good, kind-hearted creature, for taking so much trouble." And how well she knew the tastes of every one—how well she knew what little offering would be most acceptable to each. If an unseen hand had been at work for you in the house, you knew, at once, that it was my cousin Emily's. If you loved flowers, you would be sure to find a fresh nosegay in your plate when you took your seat at the breakfast-table—and all your favourite flowers would certainly be in the bouquet. If you were musical, she would sing to you all day, in the sweetest voice you ever heard in your life; if you were a painter you would be sure to find your colours and your pallets all ready for you at your own hour every day. If you delighted in books, you would always find your chamber well stored with them; and, child as was my cousin Emily, she it was who selected them from the library, well knowing whether the pages of the poet, or the philosopher, or the historian were best adapted to your individual

predilections. Indeed, wherever you moved in her father's house, you beheld traces of her "gentle spiriting." Who arranged the bouquets in the vases, and the bijouterie on the china-table, and the books in the library, but my cousin Emily? Whose handicraft was visible in the ottomans and the hearth-rugs, but my cousin Emily's? Whose voice was heard singing along the gallery, and past your chamber-door, ere you were stirring in the morning, but the voice of my cousin Emily? Always cheerful, and always active, yet apparently always at leisure, it was wonderful to think how much she did in the day, for she always appeared to be doing nothing. Every body loved her, for she was kind to every body; the servants of the house almost worshipped her; and her father—oh! never was there an only child more doated upon by an only parent. As for myself, it filled me with delight to look upon my cousin Emily. She was to me the impersonation of those "household charities," so often mentioned in the pages of my favourite poet, and I never alighted upon those two words without blessing my sweet little cousin Emily with all the fervour of my heart.

By such a father and such a daughter I need scarcely say how I was welcomed. Emily came running out to greet me with a little bundle of early violets in her hand; and after our first salu-

tations were over, and I had kissed both her dimpling cheeks, she said to me,—“ Do you still love violets, as you did when last you were here ? I hope you do, for they are *my* favourites, and I have been out this morning in the fields to pick these for you, dear Gerard ! Do you remember what you used to tell me about your violet picking at school ?—ah ! you are a man now, and you have put away childish things.”

“ Nay, Emmy, not I ; we will play together as we used to play when I was last with my cousin Emily.”

“ That was three years ago, and you are not altered, though you are taller and older, and your hair is darker ; you have just the same kind voice, and the same old smile upon your face. I am so glad that you are not changed, Gerard ; and I am sure you don't wish to be a man.”

“ Oh ! no, Emmy, don't think me a man ;—and is the old swing where it was, between the two elms in the shrubbery ?”

“ Yes, it is there still. The gardener wanted to take it down, but I would not let him do so, Gerard ; for I often go to look at it, and then I say to myself, ‘ Cousin Gerard put it up for me,’ and I think of all your kindnesses, and of all the games we played together ; and I have often said, ‘ When shall I see him again ?’—and now I see you, Gerard, and once more my hand is

in my old play-fellow's;"—and saying this, she led me to the library, where Mr. Pemberton was sitting with a volume of St. Augustin before him.

My uncle shook me cordially by the hand, spoke a multitude of kind words, asked after his brother and his sister, as he called my father and my mother, though he had only married the sister of the former, thanked me over and over again for having come to pay him this visit, shut up the ponderous folio he had been reading, and then said to me, "Come along, Gerard, and see the improvements I have been making:

Some demon whispered, 'Parson have a taste,'—

and I have been improving, as I am pleased to call it, the grounds of my suburban parsonage. Look at this, and this, and this; are you a disciple of Repton's?—Speak out boldly, as Emmy does; she declares that I have spoilt the whole place;—don't you, love; my dear little critic, now don't you think that I have ruined the place?"

"I am no judge of these things, papa," said my cousin Emily, looking up into her father's face with an arch expression of countenance,—“but I don't like these changes at all; they may be for the better, but I don't like them; I don't like changes for the better.”

“You little bigot.”

“ Ah ! I don't mind that ; but look here, Gerard, they have carried off from this place a flower-bed which I have had under my especial protection as far back as I can remember ; and they have walked off bodily with the summer-house, wherein we have drank tea and syllabub upon all my birth-day parties for years ; and they have cut down that fine old holly-tree, which has decorated the church, at Christmas, with its red berries from time immemorial, as old Blake, the sexton, tells me, and his time immemorial must be a great many years, I am sure. In short, they are a set of Goths and Vandals ; and very soon there will be nothing left to remind me of ‘ auld lang syne : ’ — my ‘ auld lang syne,’ it is true, does not comprehend quite so many ages as does that of old Blake, the sexton ; but, nevertheless, I declare upon my honour, that I'll get the boys to burn Mr. Repton in effigy on the fifth of November ; and, Gerard, you shall have the honour of setting fire to the funeral pile.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE MIST DISPERSING.

It is a tale better perhaps untold,—
A dark page in the history of mankind,
Which would be better wholly blotted out.
It grieves me much to speak of evil things
Thou knowest, yet thou urgest me to speak.—
Well, then ; draw near and listen.

MS.

On the morning after my arrival at the Rectory, one of the first things that I beheld, upon rising from my bed, was the identical *sac-de-nuit*, containing my manuscripts, the loss of which had so disquieted me upon the preceding day, now lying upon a chair in my bed-room, as quietly as though it had never absented itself. I know not which was greatest, my astonishment, or my delight, but the latter was the most enduring ; for, upon inspec-

tion, I discovered that there was a ticket upon the bag, addressed to me at my uncle Pemberton's, in the hand-writing of Michael Moore ; a circumstance which was quite sufficient to explain the mystery at once. It was clear that I had left the bag behind me at Merry-vale, and that Michael, who attended me to the coach, had discovered the omission after my departure, and forwarded the bag, by the next conveyance, to the address that I gave him ere I went. "God bless you, dear Michael," I exclaimed, "you have done me a good service this day."

When I entered the breakfast-room, my uncle was skimming the columns of a morning paper, and my cousin Emily was sitting behind a great hissing-and-smoking bronze tea-urn, which entirely shut her out from my sight. But when she saw me, she ran up to greet me, and as I bent down to kiss her, she whispered into my ear, "You lazy man!—too late for prayers;" and she pointed to a large bible and some prayer-books which lay upon a table, and seemed to rebuke me silently for my absence from family-worship.

Having shaken hands with my uncle, I took my seat at the breakfast-table ; and there was a bunch of violets, blue and white together, in my plate. "Oh ! you dear, good creature !" I exclaimed, looking gratefully into the beaming face of my sweet cousin Emily. And then, turning to my

uncle, I said, "It appears that you are early risers."

"Oh, yes!" returned Mr. Pemberton.—"Emmy and I are seldom much later than the sun in our up-risings. We have been half round the parish this morning, and both of us have been at our lessons more than an hour, and we have been superintending the *improvements*,—eh, Emmy?"—and Mr. Pemberton looked slyly at his daughter; and she tried to frown, pouting her rosy lips, and shaking her bright ringlets.

I laughed, and proceeded to banter Emily upon the subject of these hated improvements. She smiled, and looked very happy, as though my bantering delighted her. Presently, she said, "I think, Gerard, that you are in much better spirits this morning than you were last night."

"And so I am."

"Ah! I thought so; there was a cloud over your face last night."

"I will tell you why." And I told the story of my *sac-de-nuit*; saying nothing, however, about my manuscripts, but merely that it contained property of value. Mr. Pemberton asked some question about the Devonshire coaches; and, from the coaches, our discourse turned towards the roads; and from the roads, to the gentlemen's seats. "Does Sir Reginald Euston live in your part of the world?" asked my uncle.

“ Oh, yes !” said I ; “ within a mile of our house. I know him very well indeed ; he has been always very kind to me. He is a noble fellow. Uncle, do you know him ?”

“ I knew his father, Sir Willoughby ; but the present baronet I have never seen. If he is in London, I will call upon him.

“ He is in Paris :” and then I told Mr. Pemberton that he had gone thither to see a dying friend, whose name was Leonard Kirby.

“ Oh ! the kind, good man !” cried my cousin Emily ; “ I am sure that I should love him, if I were to know him.”

“ Leonard Kirby !” cried my uncle eagerly ; “ do you know to what family he belongs ?”

“ His father was General Kirby.”

“ Then, as I live !” exclaimed my uncle Pemberton, “ he is son of my old colonel ;—and he is in distress, say you ?”

“ So it appears. He is a lost, ruined, degraded man ; a broken gamester ; one of the worst of profligates ; a faithless friend ; a—”

“ Nay, Gerard ; you are harsh upon him,” interrupted my good uncle. “ If he has gone astray, he is now suffering for his errors. Let us ‘ forget his vices in his woe.’ ”

“ We will, uncle ; it was wrong to speak so harshly of him ; but I was thus loud in my indignation, because he has wronged one of the noblest

men who ever adorned the ranks of humanity,—even Reginald Euston; he, whose kind heart, laden with love and forgiveness, has sent him forth to succour the only being that has ever injured him in the world.”

“It is noble; it is high-minded,” said my uncle; “and I doubt not, but that Leonard Kirby has grievously offended against him. But, poor Leonard! he had many and great disadvantages to contend against in his youth; and, therefore, we must judge his errors mildly. Do you know his history, Gerard?”

“I know that his father is dead; — and his mother—”

“’Tis a painful story,” interrupted my uncle Pemberton. “I knew Leonard Kirby when he was an infant; and I have often dandled him in my arms. You know that I was once in the army. Colonel Kirby commanded my regiment; and a kind, good, indulgent man he was,—quite a father to all beneath him. His heart, indeed, was too kind, and, Gerard, it *broke at last*.”

“Died he broken-hearted, then?”

“Yes, Gerard; another time I will tell you this sad history; not now—I cannot tell you now;—and you say that Reginald Euston has gone to succour his afflicted friend?”

“Yes; for that purpose, to Paris,—the great hearted man!”

“I am glad that you know how to admire,” returned my uncle Pemberton, with a smile of benignity on his face; “when we cease to admire, our hearts become very hard.”

And having said this, my uncle quitted the room, leaving me with my cousin Emily. “Now, Emmy, sing to me,” I said.

Emily seated herself at the piano, and sang to me in a sweet, childish voice. I think that there are no sounds so beautiful as the tones of a very young voice. I have often felt this in a cathedral, when the chorister-boys have been chaunting an anthem: I felt this as I now sate at the piano, listening to my dear cousin Emily. And the morning passed away so pleasantly, that the sound of the dinner-bell surprised me; and dinner came—there was no one present but my uncle, my cousin Emily, and myself.

After dinner, when Emily had left us, Mr. Pemberton said to me, “Gerard, I promised that I would tell you the history of the Kirbys, and I will do so, for you spake harshly of Leonard; and I would not that you should judge him too severely. Listen to me, and you will hear much—if not to palliate his offences, at all events—to soften them in your opinion; for we must always take into consideration the predisposing causes of a disease.”

, ‘General Kirby—he was Colonel Kirby when

I knew him—married a Miss Bouverie. She was a lady of considerable personal attractions, and of very superior accomplishments. I well remember her when I was in the army, for to tell the truth, boy as I was, she paid me very marked attention; and I believe that her only reason for doing so was that I bore the reputation of a scholar, and Mrs. Kirby was herself distinguished by classical attainments of no ordinary degree. She was, at that time, in my boyish estimation, a woman of very remarkable genius, and altogether a most engaging person, though even my immature judgment discerned that there was much more to fascinate the senses than to command respect in Mrs. Colonel Kirby. Her husband, than whom she was many years younger, doated upon her with his whole soul, but she appeared not to return the warmth of his affection; nor indeed did she regard the two children, which she had borne him, with any great degree of maternal solicitude. She was, in truth, a strange, flighty, capricious woman—and her imagination, which was much too forward, often led her into unbecoming excesses. She knew not what it was to regulate her feelings, or indeed to exercise self-denial of any kind, either upon ordinary or extraordinary occasions. In short, she had very strong passions, which she did not know how to moderate, and acting always upon the impulse of the moment, she was often precipitated

into the commission of offences, which, upon reflection, filled her soul with repentance, and caused her to be the most wretched of women."

"I have said, that she never loved the colonel. Why, I know not, for he was the worthiest of men, and the most tender—the most indulgent of husbands. Perhaps it was that he did not sympathize with her tastes, and sometimes smiled at her enthusiasm. Be that as it may; she broke his heart; she fell, Gerard—she fell!"

"She fled from him—the regiment was then at Gibraltar, and her paramour was a young artilleryman—yes, strange as it may appear, Gerard, this woman, with her highly cultivated mind, fell to a common gunner of artillery. That he should have spread his net to ensnare one so far above him is not likely—indeed 'tis impossible: the man who would play the villain seeks a lowly, because a powerless victim. Lust rarely or never aspires; it is the most cowardly of all our vices, for it generally attacks the weakest. You may always know, when two of unequal station have deviated from the paths of virtue together, that the higher criminal has been the betrayer, the more lowly one the victim of the two. But enough of this; I cannot bear to dwell upon any such hateful topics. Mrs. Kirby became faithless to her husband for the sake of a young gunner of artillery."

"And his name?" said I.

“ At this moment I remember it not ; nor does it matter ; but I shall be able to inform you by referring to an old diary. It was after my abandonment of the military profession that this melancholy circumstance occurred. I have heard that he was a fine young Irishman—”

“ An Irishman !” I exclaimed, for a strange suspicion flashed across my brain at this moment—
“ An Irishman ! and he is since dead ; he was killed, was he ?—and can you not contrive to remember his name, uncle ?”

My uncle was astonished at the eagerness with which I advanced these questions ; my whole appearance manifested an intense emotion of curiosity. I was leaning forward with pale face, and parted lips, and clenched hands ; for I was in an agony of suspense, and I expected every moment to hear that which would confirm the strong suspicion that possessed me.

But my uncle did not remember the name of the artillery-man ; he smiled, and promised that he would satisfy my curiosity by referring ere long to his memoranda ; “ I believe,” said Mr. Pemberton, “ that he was a young man of good family and liberal education ; but that having quarrelled with his friends, and being without money, he enlisted as a gunner in the artillery. Colonel Kirby, by some accident or other, became acquainted with him, and patronized the young man. Through the

Colonel's interest he was promoted to the rank of sergeant. Shortly after which the detachment he belonged to was ordered home, and then Mrs. Kirby, having procured a passage in the same vessel, under a fictitious name, embarked likewise for England, having pre-arranged matters with her paramour, and thus the evil deed was accomplished. The colonel, upon being made acquainted with the calamity that had befallen him, did nothing, said nothing, but he felt too much. He uttered no curse ; he attempted no retribution, but endeavouring to veil his emotions, he invented some story to account for the absence of his wife to his brother officers and his friends, anxious, if possible, to save her reputation from the sneers and condemnations of the world. Then he tried to appear cheerful, though the worm was gnawing at his heart ; and he wore a smiling face, and he spoke kindly of his wife ; and he appeared in every respect to be the same Colonel Kirby that he was before his wife deserted him ; but his heart was breaking all this time ; and about eighteen months afterwards in England, whither he had returned upon being made a general officer, this poor man breathed his last, leaving behind him two orphan children—a boy and a little girl."

"These children," continued Mr. Pemberton, "were entrusted to the care of an aunt—a maiden lady of some fortune, who was unhappily of a

weak, vacillating nature, and totally unfit to superintend the education of young children. She was very fond of them, and she manifested her love by indulging them to a vicious extent. She never attempted to control them, nor reprimanded them when they offended; and the consequences of this over-indulgence was, that the boy, who inherited in a remarkable degree the impetuous character of his mother, grew up without any fixed principles of any kind, recognizing no other laws but his own appetites, and wilfully turning a deaf ear to the voice of duty, and indeed of expediency, for he cared as little about that which was prudent as he did about that which was right. But the girl, who inherited the mild nature of her father, escaped the ruin that descended upon Leonard. Last season, she was introduced to me at a friend's house in the metropolis, and a more gentle, a more seemingly amiable, and certainly a more beautiful girl it has seldom been my good fortune to converse with. She spoke of her brother—said that he was on the Continent, and that she had not seen him for many years. She sighed whenever she mentioned his name, and I could see that there was some secret weighing upon her poor heart. What that sorrow was, your story has explained. Let us pray for the soul of poor Leonard!”

“ But the mother—is she still living, or has she followed her husband to the grave ? ”

“ I do not know, Gerard—I think that I remember being told by an old brother officer, that she accompanied her paramour to the Peninsula, and that he was killed at the taking of Ciudad Rodrigo.”

“ Or, St. Sebastian, uncle ; do not you think that he was slain at the taking of St. Sebastian ?”

“ Very probably—nay, now I consider it, I believe that you are right,” returned my uncle.

“ And his name was—*Moore*,” said I, gasping for breath, and my limbs trembling with excitement.

“ *It was* ; now you mention the name, I remember it well,” replied my uncle. “ But, Gerard, what know you of these people, and why are you so desperately eager to be made acquainted with their whole history ?”

“ Oh ! uncle, because I know them—because Mrs. Kirby, or Mrs. Moore, or whatever her rightful name may be, is now living within a mile of our house—because I have often marvelled that one so accomplished and so lady-like should be dwelling in an humble cottage,—because, uncle, I love her children dearly, for they are the most graceful, and the most intelligent, and the most amiable creatures I have ever beheld in my life,—because, I feel an interest in the family of the Moores, which no words can describe,—often

having suspected them to be other than they seem,—often having endeavoured to pierce the obscurity which envelopes the early history of their lives,—often having discerned in the mother traces of a superior education; and in the children, of a loftier instinct than they could have inherited from a line of cottagers;—in short, uncle, it has been my leading desire, for years, to unravel this perplexity, and now by a strange accident, it is accomplished; suddenly all is made clear, and I have been saved, by this elucidation, from a world of doubt and suspense.”

I was silent; my uncle smiled at my enthusiasm, and said to me, when I had done speaking, “But, do you not think, Gerard, that you have leaped too suddenly into this conclusion?”

“I think not,” said I, and then I told my uncle that Mrs. Moore herself had acquainted me with the circumstances of her husband’s death,—how he was killed in the trenches, at the taking of St. Sebastian by the British army, in thirteen. And then I told him of my accidental discovery of her classical attainments, when she was reading Jeremy Taylor aloud, one day, to her children, and that I was quite sure, from other circumstances, that she was a woman of birth and education, fitting her better for a palace than for a cottage.

“And she was in the habit,” said my uncle

Pemberton, interrogatively, "of reading *Jeremy Taylor* to her children?"

"In the daily habit," I replied.

"Strange," said my uncle, with a sigh; "for the *Holy Living* was poor Kirby's favorite book, and he rarely passed a day without reading it."

"Then can you doubt, uncle, any longer, that *my* Mrs. Moore was once *your* Mrs. Kirby?"

"I confess, Gerard," replied my uncle, "that you have made out a clear case. And you say, that she is a good woman, a good mother, a good christian, Gerard."

"The best of women—the best of mothers—the best of christians," I replied. "If she has sinned, she has repented, and is leading a new life. Oh! uncle, if you were to see her now, so meek, so humble, so resigned—bringing up her children in the way that they should go—a very pattern of piety and devotion; you would not think that you beheld in the subdued and penitent Mrs. Moore, the impetuous and frail Mrs. Kirby. Oh! indeed she has been born again, and is leading a new life unto salvation."

"And in this course you say that she has continued for years: then, Gerard, we may hope that her penitence is complete, and that the 'old man is crucified,' within her. For salvation is not accomplished by the mere shedding of penitent tears, but by an entire turning away from wicked-

ness, and a perfect regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. I think that it is L'Estrange who writes that 'it is not for a desultory thought to atone for a lewd course of life; nor for any thing but the superinducing of a virtuous habit upon a vicious one, to qualify an effectual conversion. Tears of repentance, carried up to heaven, as an angel's gift, may be pretty, and, perhaps, harmless in poetry, though false and dangerous in divinity; for, alas! multitudes weep over their errors, but multitudes do not amend them.' "

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISSINGS OF THE WATER-SPRINKLED LOVE-
EMBERS.

“ True love never yet
Was thus constrained ; it over-leaps all fence
Like lightning, with invisible violence
Piercing its continents ; like heaven’s free breath,
Which he, who grasps can hold not ; liker death,
Who rides upon a thought, and makes his way
Through temple, tower, and palace, and the array
Of arms ; more strength has love than he or they.”

SHELLEY.

WHEN I retired that night to my chamber, and laid my head upon my pillow, I could not sleep, for my brain was overladen with the teeming thoughts that crowded upon it so thickly, that I courted oblivion in vain. The most effectual way of inducing sleep is by throwing one’s thoughts into a state of confusion ; that is, by first thinking of one thing, and then of another totally different from the first, and so on, that we may prevent a

train of thought, than which there is nothing in the world, not even pain, so inimical to sleep. I write from my own experience ; perhaps others may be inclined to differ from me.

But, whatever may be the best inducements to sleep, upon the night of which I am now writing, heaviness descended not upon my eyelids, and my ideas followed one another in succession so very orderly, so deductive, perhaps I ought to say, one conclusion leading to another, that, do what I would, I could not sleep, and at last, I gave it up in despair.

The conversation that had passed between my uncle and myself, or rather my uncle's history of the Kirbys, was, of course, the subject matter of my contemplations. I was disappointed, bitterly disappointed, for the discovery which I had just made was of a most unsatisfactory nature. It was plain that Michael and Ella were descended from well-born parentage ; gentle blood flowed in their veins ; I had suspected this all along, and now I was convinced of the fact. But what painful thoughts did that conviction bring with it ! Michael and Ella were the children of shame, the offspring of an adulterous connexion ; they were illegitimate, or, if not that, they owed their existence to an union, which, at all events, had begun in crime, even though it *might* have terminated in honesty. But this I knew not ; and the uncertainty, arising

from my speculations upon this subject, was most painful to me ; I was fully determined to sift this mystery to the bottom. Was Mrs. Moore married a second time ? and were Michael and Ella born in wedlock ?—This I asked myself again and again ; but, though I pondered much, I could not answer the question. I had no data to proceed upon ; at least, I had not sufficient to enable me to solve this problem. I did not know the precise period at which Mrs. Kirby, by the death of the General, had been made free to espouse another husband. It was true that I might easily determine this point by asking my uncle ; but, in the mean time, I had nothing to do, but to arrive at the most logical conclusion, that my very unlogical mind would admit of in this embarrassment. So I began, like my friend Smith, to “put two and two together.”

My uncle Pemberton was five-and-forty years of age ; this I knew ; and I was likewise well informed that he had bidden adieu to the army about the time that he had bidden adieu to his minority ; and, it was clear therefore, that these two concordant events must have taken place four-and-twenty years ago. Now, Lawrence Moore was eighteen ; and so it followed, that six years must have intervened between the time of my uncle's leaving the army, and the date of Larry's nativity. If General Kirby died in this interval,

then all Mrs. Moore's three children might be, and probably were, legitimate. That his demise took place subsequently to my uncle's abandonment of the army, I knew; but whether it was one or six years afterwards, I was ignorant; and it was this perplexity that distracted me in so painful a manner. Six years was a long interval of time, and for Ella, I might have allowed eight; but, even then, supposing I was to have assured myself that the General had breathed his last previously to the birth of the young Moores, how was I possibly to ascertain whether their father and mother had ever been joined together in matrimony according to the rites of the Church? The solution of one doubt seemed only to be the parent of another. But, allowing that I was to establish this point in a most satisfactory manner, what had I discovered? Absolutely nothing that could in any way raise Michael and Ella to a more exalted station upon the ladder of the world than that which they were now occupying. Indeed, I had made a discovery, which I would not, upon any account, have imparted to them; and this was to me a source of the most bitter mortification. Instead of discovering that my friends were the offspring of illustrious parents, I had discovered positively that they were children of very dishonest ones; and that not only was their father in reality a non-commissioned officer of artillery, but

that he was, moreover, a worthless reprobate, who had betrayed the confidence placed in him, and broken the heart of his benefactor. Better, much better would it have been, had I remained in my pristine ignorance.

But again it occurred to me, "Are they really *her* children? Lawrence may be, but not Michael and Ella." I know not why I should have made this distinction, except that my "wish was father to the thought," and that I had less affection for Lawrence than I had for Michael and Ella. It was clear, however, that they—the two latter—were children of the same parents. They so resembled one another in feature and complexion, and in almost every personal attribute, even to the very tones of their voices, and the smallness of their hands and feet.* They bore no likeness to their reputed mother; but then how many children are there who resemble neither of their parents; and I did not know but that Michael and Ella might have inherited their light hair and their delicate complexions from their father. But there

* Fearful lest I should be accused of plagiarism, I will quote two passages from the poemata of Lord Byron.

" — all to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine."

Manfred.

" Even to the delicacy of their hands
There was resemblance."

Don Juan.

was certainly one circumstance which warranted a reasonable conjecture that they were not the children of Mrs. Moore ; they had alluded to their reminiscences of a former state of grandeur,—they remembered marble statues and stone columns, and servants and velvet cushions ; and it was plain that they could not have beheld these things as the children of an ordnance conductor, unless, indeed, they had seen them in one of the officers' houses ; and even then it was not likely that the children would have remembered them, if they had not been in the constant habit of seeing such things in their infancy. Altogether I was very much perplexed, but the more distracted I became, the greater mixture of hope was there in my perplexity.

Then the circumstance of the fifty-pound note, that I had discovered in the *Erasmus*, occurred to me. There were the coat-of-arms and the initials E.A., what had they to do with the Kirby's, and who was represented by these two vowels ? and how came Mrs. Moore with the book ? This last question was easily answered. Mrs. Moore, or Col. Kirby, or any body else, might have bought the volume at a sale. In every collection of books you may see a variety of armorial bearings ; and as for the fifty-pound note, there was no possible way of accounting for its interposition between the pages of the volume, but by the care-

lessness of a former owner who had placed the bill there as a mark, and had subsequently forgotten to remove it.

And having summed up all the evidence before me in the most judge-like manner imaginable, I, at length, arrived at the conclusion that, although there could be very little doubt of the real parentage of Michael and Ella, it was just possible that they might not be the children, either legitimate or illegitimate, of Mrs. Moore; and, although this possibility was a mere straw for me to catch at, yet it was something, and a very little hope is much better than blank despair. Solacing myself with this little hope, I, at length, fell asleep.

On the following morning, having previously discovered from my uncle, that Lawrence Moore could by no possibility be otherwise than a child of shame, since General Kirby was living at the time of the boy's nativity, I travelled up to London by a public conveyance, taking with me my precious manuscripts, that I might leave them for approval or rejection, at the house of a celebrated publisher. This I did, without presenting myself, in person, before such an awful tribunal; for I thought that it would be as easy to explain my wishes by letter as by word of mouth; besides, I was of a nervous temperament, which shrunk, at all times, from personal communication with

strangers, upon matters of business ; and upon the present occasion, I was not without apprehension, that my vanity might meet with a rebuff.

Having left my manuscripts, with a note, at the publisher's, I proceeded towards the lodgings of my friend Smith, for he was living alone in Gower Street, during the short Easter vacation. His family resided in one of our great northern towns, Liverpool, or Birmingham, or Manchester, or Halifax ; and as he intended to pass the long vacation with his friends, he did not think it worth his while to travel so great a distance for the two or three weeks at Easter. " Besides," said Smith, " I have such a large acquaintance in our town, that with the best possible resolutions, I should find myself compelled to be idle, and I cannot afford to sacrifice *all* my vacations to my friends. I have been laughed at for selecting London as a place to read in, but there is no spot in the world that holds out fewer temptations to seduce me from my books than the metropolis. When I see the bright sun, from my study windows, shining upon the green landscape, I feel an instinctive desire to throw aside my books, and to luxuriate in the open air ; but here, in this smoky city, with nothing but dingy brick-houses around me on every side, I think that I am better at home than abroad, and I have no desire to extend my ex-

cursions further than the world of books." Thus reasoned John Smith, and there was wisdom too in what he advanced.

I found the man of sense in his lodgings, making notes upon one of Pindar's Olympiads. His table was groaning under the weight of Stephens' *Treasury*, Facciolati's Latin Lexicon, and sundry other books of reference, less bulky in their dimensions. He wore a grey frieze dressing gown, and a pair of carpet slippers, in regular reading costume, and altogether he looked comfortable, and independent; not a pale-faced, lean student, but a stout, healthy-looking scholar, who neither ate nor slept the less for his industry, nor suffered the lamp of learning to consume one drop of the oil of health. He used to say that, "in the pursuit of knowledge, if the mind travel so fast that it exhausts the energies of the body, the weakness of the body will retard the advances of the mind, as a worn-out fellow traveller clings to his companion for support, and then both of them labour on with difficulty." But I was not, by any means, disposed to coincide in this opinion; for when my body has been weakest, my mind has been always most strong; and I think that there is nothing which more deadens the intellect than a rude state of animal health. I should like much to enlarge upon this subject, but I do not think that it is

the province of the novelist to indulge in such subtle disquisitions.

The first thing that Smith said to me was, "Well, Doveton, have you heard from Anstruther, Esq., of Charlton Abbey, in the county of H——?"

I shook my head, and replied, "But there has not been time yet."

"Plenty," said Smith; "if he had written by post, on the day after his arrival, you might have received your money by this time."

"But, my dear fellow!" I returned, "consider the circumstances of the case:—a dying mother, and all the miseries attending upon a death-bed scene. You may well give him a week, after the funeral, to recover his self-possession."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed John Smith.

There was a pause: I had nothing to say in reply to that decisive monosyllable. But Smith, changing the subject, presently asked, whether I had recovered my carpet-bag?

"Yes!" I cried, with an air of triumph; for had the advantage of Smith there.

"And in the way, I suppose, that I recommended to you?" said the man of sense, with a smile.

"By no means," replied the man of imagination, drawing himself up with the air of a conqueror.

“How, then?”

“I left it behind me, at Merry-vale, and Michael Moore was kind enough to forward it.”

“And, pray, who is Michael Moore?”

This question induced an explanation; for I really liked Smith. I was of an open, confiding nature; and I loved to unburthen my heart to any one who had inspired me with affection. So I told him the whole history of the Moores; my friendship for Michael, and the love I bare towards Ella; and my suspicions that they were other than they seemed.

Smith's face wore a serious aspect, as he said, “Have you ever reflected upon the nature of your alliance with these people?”

“What do you mean?”

“Simply this,” said the man of sense; and slowly and calmly his words came forth, as he continued: “It appears, from your story, that you are enamoured of this Ella Moore, and that the girl returns your affection.—Is this the case?”

The blood mounted to my very forehead, as I replied, “Yes, it is.”

“And have you ever reflected upon the probable issue of this mutual attachment? You say that the girl is beautiful;—she is a cottage-girl, far beneath you;—young, simple, and confiding. Now, listen to me, Gerard Doveton: I have long known you, and I fully believe in the kindness of

your heart and the integrity of your principles.—I do not think that you are a villain.”

“ *A villain !*” I exclaimed, starting from my seat, and clenching my hand as I spoke.

“ Nay, Doveton, hear me out,” said Smith, with the utmost calmness. “ I say that I do not think you a villain. I believe you to be honest, generous, and kind-hearted. I do not think that you would ruin this girl.”

“ Let me beseech you, Smith, to spare me these negative compliments. I do not see why you should tell me that you do *not* think me a villain.”

“ Because, though *I* do not think so, *others*, perhaps, may. You are more than eighteen,—the girl two years younger. As children, you might have consorted harmlessly together ; but now, Doveton, your own good sense must point out the necessity of breaking off this alliance. It is a pity that you should have proceeded to this extremity ; for it will cost you much anguish to break asunder the link that so long has bound you together.”

“ It will break my heart !”

“ And yet it must be done. Better to die, than to be suspected. You are not bound to live ; but you are bound to live honestly.”

“ And why not live honestly *with Ella* ?”

“ Oh, yes !” replied Smith ; “ you certainly may marry the girl.”

“To be sure. Then why talk so much about villany, and heart-breaking separations?”

“Hear me, Doveton,” replied the man of sense; “it may be, that you will smile with contempt, when I talk about conventional distinctions and say that it would little become you to marry this cottage girl. If I cause you pain, I am sincerely sorry for it; but believe me, Gerard, that my opinion is the opinion of the whole world. You may despise that opinion, and think that you are superior to any such paltry considerations; but perhaps you will acknowledge, with me, that it would be both unwise and selfish to sacrifice your own happiness and that of your best beloved.”

“Doubtless; and that sacrifice would be made, if Ella and I were to be sundered.”

“Perhaps not; you think so at present; but when you have thought about it a little, you will find that it is not so impossible to reconcile yourself to this change. Time has a wonderful effect upon sorrow; and it is astonishing with what fortitude we bear, after a season, the evils which, at first sight, appear to be absolutely insupportable. You will soon forget Ella Moore. Have you got a pretty cousin, Doveton?”

“The prettiest that ever was seen.”

“Then fall in love with her as quickly as you can.”

“Smith, I entreat you not to talk in this heartless manner. I love the girl—I love Ella Moore; and why should I not marry her?”

“Oh! marry her,” said Smith, “marry her by all means, and be discarded by your whole family. Marry her, and entail upon your wife the odium of all your relatives; exalt her to a station in society, where her claims will be unacknowledged; expose her to endless contumely, and a series of cruel mortifications; allow her the satisfaction of feeling that she has ruined her doating husband; yes, Doveton, let her see that she has brought upon you the curses of your parents and the scoffs of society, and then ask her if she be happy.—Oh! my friend, man never did grosser injury to woman, than by raising her to a station in society, which she was never intended to fill.”

“Smith, if you were once to see Ella, you would never talk to me again in this manner. I’ll answer for it that you have formed in your mind a very incorrect notion of the girl. If you think that she is one of your thick-limbed country wenches, with coarse, rosy cheeks, and clumsy ankles, and red hands, and calf-like movements, and a harsh voice, and a corrupt dialect, you are grievously in error, I assure you. In the first place, she is exceedingly beautiful ——”

“Of course.”

“And she is full of grace; every action, every

motion of her limbs, whether she sits, or walks, or stands, is replete with the most exquisite grace. I tell you, Smith, that in any assemblage, among the gentlest, the most high-born ladies of the land, would Ella Moore be "the observed of all observers." With her slender, undulating figure, and her blue eyes, and her small features, and her tiny white hands, and her pretty little feet, she is as delicate and as aristocratic a maiden, as though she had been bred in a palace. And her mind, Smith—oh ! think not, I beseech you, that it is coarse, and ignorant, and indiscriminating ; for she is endowed with an exquisite sense of the beautiful and becoming ; thoughtful is she, much has she read, and when she speaks to you, you would think an angel were speaking, such melody is there in the tones of her voice."

"One thing seems very clear, however," said Smith, with a smile upon his face.

"And what is that ?"

"Why, 'tis clear from your glowing description of the girl, that you are devotedly in love with her, Gerard. I would that it were otherwise, my friend ; for I do not think that much happiness is likely to accrue from your attachment. The girl may be all that you describe her ; nay, I think that she is, Doveton ; for you are not one to see perfections that do not actually exist. But however beautiful and accomplished she may be in

herself, you must feel that in station she is far beneath you ; and I have already described some of the miseries that result from an ill-assorted match. Be not impelled by passion, but guided by reason. Oh ! my friend, if ever you have listened to my advice, give ear to it now, I beseech you. Consider well what you are about ; pause ere you have gone too far ; restrain the impetuosity of your nature ; and do not suffer the calm voice of reason to be overswayed by the hurricane of your passions."

Smith spoke with an earnestness and a rapidity of utterance quite at variance with the even tenor of his common discourses. I had never seen him so much moved before ; it was plain that my interest was very dear to him, and that he regarded me with sincere affection. No ordinary cause of inquietude could thus have ruffled the calmness of his nature. I looked into his face ; and his massive features wore an expression of earnest sorrow. I was almost tempted to cry aloud, " You have prevailed, Smith, you have prevailed."

But my great love for Ella Moore restrained me. What was Smith to me in comparison with her ? What were all his homilies, and his eternal common-sense, when weighed against one kind word, or one smile of affection from Ella ?—" Smith," said I, " you are my friend, I know it ; I see that you are my sincere friend. But I cannot abandon the Moores ;

I cannot tear out the love of Ella from my heart, without bursting all its strings asunder: as long as its pulses continue to beat, they must, they shall beat for her. Smith, you do not know what it is to love, or you would not talk in this strain to me. I tell you, that for her sake I am ready to sacrifice every thing; friends, parents, station, every blessing in the world, but her love. *Station*, indeed! what is station to me? I will descend to her station; on me shall the tempest fall. What if I should give up everything, and live with Ella Moore in a cottage? there is nothing of selfishness in that."

"You talk like a puling, love-sick boy, as you are," returned John Smith.—"How many have uttered before you just this same farrago of nonsense, about cottages and broken hearts, and all the other pet symbols of the tender passion, yet how few have put their love and their philosophy to the proof, by giving up, for the sake of the beloved, one tittle of the common comforts of life. You think that you mean what you say, but you do not; no, no, Gerard, no cottages for you.

'Love in a hut, with water and a crust,
Is—love forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust.'

Take my word for it, that the writer of these lines is perfectly correct in his assertion. Love in a

hut ! Doveton ; nonsense ! Hunger and cold, and nakedness, and squalling children, and tickets for soup from the Mendicity Society, and no end of distraining for rent."

" I did not think, Smith," I replied, beginning to lose my temper, " that you were capable of talking such absurdity. I took you for a man of sense ; I find you a man of nonsense. *Hunger* and *cold*, what silly bug-bears ! just like the *bogies*, which the nursery-maid conjures up to frighten young children. Hunger, indeed ! have I not a hand to execute, and a head to contrive ? have I not faculties, mind, intellect ?"—

" And nine hundred pages of manuscript in your carpet bag ?"—cried John Smith.

" This is too much ; it is, indeed," I exclaimed. —" Smith, you will drive me mad."

" Nay, Doveton, you are that already," returned Smith, with the utmost calmness.

" Do you wish, Sir, to drive me from your house ?" and I started from my seat, as I spoke. " Do you wish, Sir, to, to, to——in short, do you wish to insult me ?"

" Why, as you put the question so frankly," replied Smith, " frankly shall you be answered, Doveton. I *do* think that you are wasting my time by staying here. I *do* think that you had better be gone."

" Oh ! certainly, certainly, Mr. Smith ;" en-

deavouring to assume an air of levity, as I seized my hat and retired, "your most obedient; good morning, Sir;" and I grasped the handle of the door, but my arm trembled so much with excitement, that it was some time before I could open it.

"Yet stay, Doveton,—do not go yet," cried Smith; "I don't wish you to leave me in a passion."

I did not answer, and Smith continued, "I acknowledge, Doveton, that I was wrong."

Now, this was the first time that Smith had ever confessed himself wrong, in any of his transactions with me, for indeed, it was the first time that he had been wrong. But the acknowledgment had its due effect. I returned to my seat, and laid my hat upon the table, and said, "Well, Smith, I forgive you."

"And you really love this girl, with your whole soul?" asked Smith.

"I have told you so before," said I.

"And she loves you with an equal measure of affection?"

"I think so."

"'Tis not enough to think."

"I am sure that she does; all her words, and looks, and actions, betray her love."

"And you know what love is—you know how to interpret those signs?"

“ Oh, Smith ! can you ask me such a question ? —Do you not remember the first conversation that ever passed between us two ? Oh ! ever since I began to think, has one strong and absorbing desire possessed my whole soul ; a desire, or rather I should say a burning thirst, to be loved. And can you ask me whether I know what love is, and what are its common manifestations — me, who have watched for hours the changing aspect of a countenance, looking for an expression of love—me, who, with the most subtle sense of hearing, have analysed every voice that has addressed me, hoping to catch a tone of affection—me, who have watched, and prayed, and panted for love, as the hart pants for the water-brooks. Oh, Smith ! can you ask *me*, whether I know what are its signs ? ”

The man of sense did not smile at my enthusiasm. His face was sad, and I thought that I perceived an unwonted glistening in his eyes. He shook me by the hand, and said very kindly, “ Well, Doveton, I have nothing more to say. I was wrong, from the very first, to intrude my advice upon such delicate matters as these. What have I do with such things ? What do I know about the inmost feelings of your heart ? You must let those feelings decide for you. I perhaps, least of all men in the world, am competent to give advice upon love matters. Commune with your

own heart, and I do not think that you will act impurely; though, perhaps, you will act unwisely. But as the old Roman said, and as I once quoted to you before, 'Oh! how hard it is both to love and to be wise.' Doveton, I will say no more to you. Love is the province of the heart, not of the head; and, therefore, you must be guided by your own feelings, and not by my advice. This is unsaying all that I have said to you before; but I will stand the charge of inconsistency. Common sense, and love, have nothing to do with one another."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ERRATIC COURSES OF THE IMAGINATION.

" I had a noble purpose, and the strength
To compass it: but I have stopped half-way,
And have bestowed the first fruits of my toil
On objects little worthy to receive them."

BROWNING.

" 'Tis by comparison an easy task
Earth to despise; but to converse with Heaven,
This is not easy."

WORDSWORTH.

TIME passed—and very delightfully, at the house of my good uncle. I must, indeed, have been a discontented, hungry mortal, if I had not been happy there. Summer was coming on; and in the spring-time of the year, I always breathe an atmosphere of hope. And then there was my uncle, a being to admire, and my cousin Emily, a creature to love; and a life of "admiration,

hope, and love," is indeed a very pleasant existence.

But there were two opposing circumstances that disquieted me—two little cloudlets floating about the pure heaven of my serenity—and they were these: that week after week passed away, and brought me no tidings of Mr. Anstruther, and that during this time, no communication of any sort was received by me from Sir Reginald Euston.

Perhaps, I might add to these a third source of discomfort. My manuscripts were returned by the bookseller to whom I entrusted them, with a very polite note, stating that "the multitude of his engagements prevented him from having the honour, &c., of introducing my work to the public." Upon this, I forwarded them to another publisher, and the same answer was returned;—to another, and my third application brought a third reply, resembling its forerunners.

"More writers than readers," thought I, as I locked up the notes in my writing-desk.

But I was young, and I was full of faith. A few stormy days will strip the trees of their foliage in Autumn; but in the Summer, though the winds may blow with all their virulence, not a leaf falleth to the ground. Youth can bear up against misfortunes, beneath the pressure of which age would

be crushed ; and, indeed, I was little dispirited by the failure of my three grand hopes.

One night, after I had retired to my chamber, it occurred to me that I would reperuse the manuscripts which had been treated so scornfully by the booksellers. I did so ; and I was immediately struck by the multitude and the heinousness of the faults which disfigured my poor work. Suddenly this consciousness came upon me with a strange sickening sensation. I read on ; and every page presented a new catalogue of monstrous deformities. Some passages were wretchedly flat,—others horribly exaggerated,—exaggeration was indeed the main feature of the work, for it was fatally over-written ; and almost every character was strained into a *lusus naturæ*. I had neither men nor women in my drama ; all the actors were either angels or demons. Where I had attempted to be profound, I was generally obscure,—where humorous, always absurd,—where forcible, invariably grotesque. The story itself was in one part disjointed,—in another inextricably involved. Perhaps there never was a book written with so many faults in it of a totally opposite nature. Extremes of every kind met together in its pages ; and as a whole it was a miserable distortion. Yet, nevertheless, paradoxical as it may appear, there were abundant signs of genius in every chapter of the work. It

was a sort of intellectual phenomenon. There were incidents enough in the volumes to form the machinery of half-a-dozen novels, and they followed one another with inconceivable rapidity, yet nevertheless the interest of the story flagged awfully, and the action of the plot was languid in the extreme. It was intended to be a philosophical narrative, and yet it was remarkably flippant, at the same time that it was excessively dull. But in spite of this it was a work of genius,—a splendid piece of extravagant folly. Its faults were chiefly those of a too exuberant imagination. I had thrown all my wealth into its pages without selection or arrangement; and a number of beautiful parts may make a very inharmonious whole, as Albert Durer found, when he did “take the best parts of divers faces, to make one excellent;” or as Frankenstein discovered when he put together a number of beautiful limbs and features; and made a complete—*monster*. The fact is, with regard to myself and my book, that I had had far too much to say; the thoughts and feelings of a whole life, which had long been garnered up in my brain, were now emptied into these volumes. I had confessed myself, as Göthe said, in this book; I had rid myself of much perilous stuff, and had done my mind much service by this first attempt at authorship; though the attempt had been a lamentable failure.

Smith, to whom I had imparted the history of my transactions with the booksellers, and of my subsequent mortifying discovery, thus wrote to me. —“How could you have expected otherwise, my dear Doveton? Did I not tell you that there could be nothing more worthless than the manuscripts of a boy of eighteen? But let not this failure dishearten you; and above all things, *do not burn these manuscripts*, for although the booksellers have refused them, and you yourself are ashamed of their deformities, they may nevertheless contain much valuable material which will be of use to you in another form, though in its present state utterly worthless. There can be no greater mistake than the destruction of MSS. by an author in a fit of indignation. He is sure to repent of the act. However bad your work may be as a whole, there are probably detached passages in it which you will never surpass in the maturity of your intellect. Do not destroy, but select; and remember, Doveton, that exaggeration in a young author is the most venial of all offences, even as a propensity to run away is a fault, which in a young horse we most readily overlook. There is no hope for an authorling if he begins tamely; for age softens down, but does not strengthen; and whilst it sharpens the judgment, it dulls the brightness of the imagination. Perhaps your creative powers will

never be more vigorous than they are now ; but years will bring you critical discernment. You know how to make ; you must now learn how to destroy. Study the *art of blotting*, for without this *few* arrive at eminence ; I was about to say *none*, but it was Shakspeare's boast that he had 'never blotted a line.' Ben Jonson's comment thereupon you know as well I do, my dear Doveton. I will not say to you, in the words of Martial,—

Comitetur punica librum

Spongia

Non possunt multæ, una litura potest.*

But I will advise you to take the pen into your hand, and *dele—dele—dele* : blot whatever you think objectionable, and never doubt,—doubt is condemnation ; for if you be not sure that a passage is good you may make yourself certain that it is bad.—And, Doveton, a few words more. You may take occasion, in one of the chapters of your book, to recommend young gentlemen to be careful how they open their purses to interesting strangers with pale faces, black cloaks, and dying mothers at Bath. I hope that you will charge Mr. Anstruther the interest of your money, *when you get it*. In the *mean time* be

* Take the sponge, boy ; undo what you have done,
Not *many* blots will mend your book, but *one*.

guided by the counsels of your friend, JOHN SMITH."

And guided by his counsels I was.—I became a critic, where before I was a poet. I began to pull down, where before I had built up, and I commenced the work of destruction most relentlessly. It often happens, or, to use the language of Festus in the poem,*

" It must oft fall out
That he whose labour perfects any work
Shall rise from it with eye so worn, that he
Least of all men can measure the extent
Of that he has accomplished ;"

and it is certain that, when I first left my book at the publisher's, I had a very imperfect knowledge of its actual merits, for there was a very strong impression on my mind of the excellence of what I had written ; but, having for some time rested from the labour of composition, and not having, in this interim, even glanced at my productions, I now reperused them with a new mind, or as though they had been the work of another. My eyes were no longer dazzled by the false glitter of my meretricious achievements ; I saw, with a mortifying distinctness, the glaring faults that I

* Browning's *Paracelsus*.

had committed ; the enchantment was gone ; all that had appeared so bright and so solid was nothing but “ ‘Tantalus’ gold, no substance but mere illusions ; ”—and I, myself, no longer one of the magnates of the land, but a beggar—not a Dives, but a Lazarus—not a conqueror, but a miserable dupe.

But I did not despair. Nothing makes me so strong as the consciousness of once having failed ; and so it was that I set about rebuilding the tower that I had demolished, with energies far surpassing those which had erected the original edifice. My work progressed ; and I said to myself, “ If we desire to succeed, there is nothing like a failure at the outset.”

All this time my moral character was undergoing a great and important change for the better. The constant companionship of my uncle and my cousin Emily had a most beneficial influence upon my young and plastic mind. My uncle corrected all my erroneous impressions ; whilst my cousin Emily in her own beautiful self, exemplified her father’s precepts. I regarded the one as the impersonation of religion ; the other, of domestic charity ; and it was very plain that I had been led, by my imagination, into grievous offences against these two best qualities, which together make the perfection of the Christian character ; and this knowledge sorely distressed me. I had

very few fixed dogmas of faith; altogether my notions of religion were of the most vague and confused nature imaginable; and to confess the truth, I wandered on in ignorance; and if I did the work of God, I knew it not.*

One morning when we had risen from family worship, my uncle said to me, "My dear Gerard, do you pray in secret to the Giver of good things?" My answer was a deep blush—and then one word was faltered out—"Sometimes."

"*Sometimes!*" replied my uncle—"You mean, Gerard, that when your mind is distressed—when affliction comes upon you and your hopes are darkened, you then pray to him for assistance; the selfishness of your nature—forgive the harshness of the phrase—compels you to acknowledge your God."

"Nay, uncle, I never denied Him."

"Not in words, perhaps; but do you not deny, by practically refusing to commune with, Him, except in the hour of tribulation? 'Affliction teaches a wicked person sometimes to pray; Prosperity never;† which sheweth that gratitude—'" then he checked himself suddenly, for his truthfulness was gaining the ascendancy over his charity,

* "Glad hearts without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not."

WORDSWORTH.

† Ben Jonson's 'Discoveries.'

and continued—"But prayer, my dear boy, to be efficacious must be enduring."

"Oh, uncle! I have been very wicked—very ungrateful——"

"No, Gerard," interrupted my uncle; "you have been guilty of a culpable neglect, but you have not been very wicked. You have thought, perhaps, that as you have *committed* no sin, you have had no occasion to pray, as forgiveness is the main object of our prayers; but it is not the sole object: and there are sins, you know, of *omission*. We may 'leave undone those things which we ought to do,' as well as 'do those things which we ought not to do.' But you know this, my dear boy; and therefore I need not enlarge upon the matter. You are a reader and an admirer of Wordsworth's poetry; do you know what he calls prayer?"

I pondered for a few moments, and then replied in the negative.

"I will tell you then," replied my uncle—

"A stream, which from the fountain of the heart
Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength."

"Oh, uncle," I exclaimed,— "how true!—I have often been strengthened by prayer."

"Then pray night and morning, my dear boy; and you will be stronger than you are now. Be-

sides," added my uncle, "you are of a grateful nature; you are grateful to all your friends—even to me, who have done so little for you, very frequently do you express your gratitude. Human kindness never descends upon you unheeded or unacknowledged; why then are the exceeding goodnesses of God, which far surpass all earthly gifts, accepted by you with an unthankful heart? You cannot answer me; then, my dear boy, let 'the outgoings of the morning and evening praise Him;' and sometimes think that He is with you. Oh! indeed Gerard, it is a pleasant thing 'to build God a chapel in our heart.' 'Elige vitam optimam,' wrote Seneca — 'consuetudo faciet jucundissimam.'"

On another occasion, my good uncle said to me, "Gerard, I often hear you in your discourses making use of the words *Nature* and *Fate* in a manner more befitting a priest of Isis, than a worshipper of the Christian's God. Nature and Necessity were the deities of the Egyptians—the passive and active principles to which they referred all things. But *we* talk not in this wise. What is Necessity or Fate, or Destiny, but the will of God?—What is Nature but the operation of that will? The one the cause, the other the effect? But you will think, perhaps, that I am disputing about terms, and that my objections are mere verbal hyper-criticism. You mean the same thing, do you?

Then to-morrow, perhaps, you will talk about an Avatar, and say that you mean the incarnation of Christ."

"My dear uncle!"

"There is nothing more dangerous than this confusion of terms. But it is most probable, Gerard, then, when you make use of the words *Nature* and *Fate*, you attach no distinctive meanings to them; and that they merely serve as the indices of certain crude ideas in your mind. You use them chiefly because they are poetical; and yours is a poetical temperament. Now tell me, when you talk about Nature and Fate, do you attach to these words any single idea of the Divinity?"

I was obliged to confess that I did not. "But is it wrong," I asked, "to use the word *nature*?"

"Not at all," replied my uncle,—“in its proper sense, —meaning thereby the operations of the Deity: but you speak of it as though it were the Deity itself. I have heard you talk about the ‘will of nature,’ the ‘power of nature,’ and so on, as though nature were an active principle; indeed, as though it were the Great First Cause; when it is only the effect of that cause. I know whence you derive these expressions, and there is no impurity in the source; but you must remember, Gerard, that we allow to poetry a certain latitude of expression, which cannot be admitted in common conversation: and for this reason, that it is

dangerous to familiarize ourselves to any vagueness of expression which may in any way render less distinct our ideas of the thing to be expressed. I am sorry to say, my dear boy, that I have known many warm admirers of nature, who have been but indifferent worshippers of God; and I have heard the 'benignant powers of nature' extolled by those who have scoffed at the Deity. These are stern truths, Gerard; and I would not have touched upon them, but as a warning to you. I think that I have heard you say, that you are acquainted with the writings of Jeremy Taylor."

"Oh, yes, uncle!—I have read some of them very often."

"Then you cannot have forgotten that section of the *Holy Living*, 'On the Practice of the Presence of God.'—This good man does not talk about *nature*, but about the ubiquity of the Creator. You will find the volume on the second row of the shelves to your right-hand, as you enter the library."

And when I had brought the book to my uncle, he opened it, and presently he read: "Let everything you see, represent to your spirit the presence, the excellency, and the power of God; and let your conversations with the creature lead you to the Creator; for so shall your actions be done, more frequently with *an actual eye to God's presence, by frequently seeing him in the glass of the*

creation. In the face of the sun you may see God's beauty; in the fire you may feel his heat warming; in the water, his gentleness to refresh you." "You see, Gerard, that there is no talk about *nature* here. *His* theme is the omnipresence of God: and I cannot recommend to you a better ensample than this spiritual man, Jeremy Taylor."

"Oh!" I exclaimed, "years ago, Mrs. Moore recommended his works to my perusal; and I have read them, but it appears with little profit."

"How strangely do events come to pass, in connection with one another!" replied my uncle. "I it was, who first directed the attention of Colonel Kirby to these writings; he recommends them to his wife; and she, in turn, to my nephew." And this led us to recur to the history of the Moores; and we spake no more of religion that day.

And whilst my uncle, by his precepts, was training me "in the way that I should go," my cousin Emily was constantly setting before me an example of kindness and love, which was equally, with the doctrines of her father, beneficial to my morality.

I had not been long in my uncle's house, before I began fully to comprehend the meaning of Smith's reproachful allusion to my neglect of those petty offices of kindness which ensure us so much love;—

“ Those little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of charity and love,”

which Wordsworth calls, with exquisite truth, the “best portion of a good man’s life;” and which I hitherto had neglected as minutiae too paltry to be accounted in the least degree worthy of consideration. Resting satisfied with the consciousness that I was prepared to make any great sacrifices for those I loved, it had never occurred to me that I might conciliate affection by little acts of domestic kindness: but now, my cousin Emily taught me that I had all along been fatally in error. I scarcely believed Smith, when he told me that this neglect was the reason why I was no favourite at home; but my cousin Emily’s daily behaviour was a tacit, but a constant reproach to me: and beholding in her a line of conduct, directly opposite to my own, producing a directly opposite result, my heart acknowledged the truth of Smith’s strictures, and I beheld too plainly the full extent of my delinquency. There is no reproach that sinks into the heart so deeply as the sight of another performing—and being rewarded for the performance of—those duties which we have failed in ourselves; and, therefore, every little act of kindness that my cousin Emily did,—and she was doing them all day long towards her father, or towards me,—reminded me of my own sins of

omission ; and I felt how very inferior in kindness, and in love, I was to my cousin Emily. But this sense of inferiority is a worker of much good ; and we are seldom mortified by the superior virtues of another very long before we endeavour to emulate them.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LONG-EXPECTED ONES.

“ Flowers are lovely, love is flower-like,
Friendship is a sheltering tree—
Oh! the joys that came down shower-like,
Of friendship, love, and liberty,
Ere I was old.”

COLERIDGE.

ONE day—it was in the beginning of June—I was lying beneath a birch-tree upon the lawn, reading the Bible,—yes, reader, the Bible, for my uncle’s admonitions had wrought a very serious change upon the nature of my habits and reflections, and I had become, for I always fell into extremes, something very like a religious enthusiast, when my cousin Emily came running up to me, with a letter in either hand, and before she had reached the spot

where I was lying, she cried out to me in her gladsome, musical voice,—“Gerard, dear! what will you give me for these,—what will you give me for these letters?”

“A kiss, Emmy, love,” I replied.

“And will you pay your courier extraordinary no better than that, Gerard?” and my cousin Emily shook her beautiful ringlets, for she had run out to me bare-headed with the letters.

“A *thousand* kisses, Emmy, I will give you.”

My cousin Emily held up the letters above her head, and cried out, “News—news! plenty of news, Gerard,—foreign post-marks, and franks by Cabinet Ministers; they have made you Lord Chancellor at least.”

Up I started from my recumbent position, my heart beating almost audibly. “Oh! Emmy, give me the letters;—you little provoking creature you; come back, come back;”—for seeing my eagerness to possess the letters, she had run away—the playful little thing!—and I now heard her ringing laugh, as fawn-like she bounded across the lawn.—“Oh! come back, Emmy,” I exclaimed.

But on went my cousin Emily, so I ran after her, crying out, “Emmy, you dear creature, do stop;” but still she laughed, and still she bounded onward, her hair uplifted by the breeze, and the scarf, which she had thrown over her shoulders, streaming out, like a meteor, behind her. Soon,

for I was the fleeter of the two, I gained upon her, and at length I had caught her. "You provoking little creature, I will pay you for this," I exclaimed, as I clasped her in my arms, and smothered her forehead, cheeks, lips, neck, shoulders, all, with kisses. "Now, Emmy, give me the letters, for I am dying to see what they contain."

"Well, then, here they are," said my cousin Emily;" but you naughty man, you don't deserve them:—gently, Gerard, one at a time; it becomes you to be more patient;—now, here, you may take this first, it is a letter from Lord ——, inviting you to be Lord Chancellor, or Lord Privy Seal, or something of that kind; and, here, Gerard, is the other from Paris,—from the king of France, I have not the smallest doubt; perhaps he has written to ask whether you will condescend to be English tutor to the Dauphin. And now, Gerard, I will leave you to digest these two important proposals;" and off ran my cousin Emily, singing all the way as she went.

My heart beat most violently, and I trembled all over as I looked at the superscriptions of these two letters. The one from Paris I immediately guessed to be a communication from Sir Reginald Euston; and the other, which was franked by a Cabinet Minister, I rather thought, contained the offer of a situation in one of the government offices, procured by the good baronet's instrumentality.

I was almost afraid to open this letter; I looked at the direction again and again;—there was the hand-writing of Lord ——; but the letter had not come from London, but from his Lordship's country seat in H—shire, whither I knew he had withdrawn himself, though in the very middle of the session, for the purpose of recruiting his health. At length I summoned courage and tore open the envelope; the inclosure was addressed in a different hand-writing; I opened that also, and a bank-note fell from the letter upon the ground.

It was from Anstruther.—The letter commenced with “My dear young friend,” and ended with “very sincerely your obliged and grateful Edwin Anstruther.” His mother was only just dead, and he wrote to me the day after the funeral. Her sufferings had been protracted to a length surprising to all the faculty, and, throughout this time, Mr. Anstruther had watched constantly beside her, in a state of mind almost bordering upon delirium, and no thought had entered his brain unconnected with his poor mother. He implored me to look with kindness upon his neglect, and not to judge harshly of his seeming absence of honourable and gentleman-like feeling. In conclusion, he entreated that I would write to him;—“and” he added, “tell me, I beseech you, if there be any means whereby I may practically testify the gratitude that I have professed to you in words. Can

I serve you? Answer me frankly; and let no false delicacy prevent you from doing me this favour. I am longing to render you some service. What shall I do for you? I have money; I have interest—interest in the political and the literary worlds—interest in the army and in the church. Will you come and live with me? I have a large house, a wide park, horses and dogs and game and fish in abundance; but I live alone—I am a companionless being—a fragment broken off from the main rock of humanity. My house is always a house of mourning, and I feel that I am not a companion for one in the spring season of his youth, full of hope, and life, and animal spirits; and I would not that my gloom should throw a shadow over the sunshine of your heart. I tell you, therefore, what you will find:—without, a beautiful country, extensive gardens, and pleasure-grounds, every thing that you can desire, if you be a sportsman, whether you hunt, shoot, or fish;—within, a well-stored library, a picture gallery not wholly worthless, and a childless, broken-hearted old man, who will open his arms to receive you, and pour upon you the little love that is not buried with the dead in their graves.”

Large tear-drops rolled down my cheeks as I read these affecting passages in poor Anstruther's letter. “I knew it,” said I, “I never doubted his truth; I was always sure that some day he

would write to me,—and so kind too,—oh ! yes, I will go to him. He wants me ; he wants a friend ; he is childless, I will be to him a son ;”——but here I checked myself, and thus continued my soliloquy. “ No, no, this must not be ; Gerard Doveton, this must not be. He is rich ; he has no children ; and if there be a pitiful creature in the world, I am sure that creature is a legacy-hunter. No, Gerard Doveton, into the affections of this man you worm not yourself honestly. Away with the debasing thought at once !—not so fallen, not so mean, not so contemptible as that——” and then I cried aloud in all the enthusiasm of truth,—“ Oh ! would that Mr. Anstruther were poor !”

“ But I will thank him,” I thought, “ I will thank him for his kindness. I will write to him this moment, and pour out the gratitude of my heart ;”——and thinking this, I entered the house, and ran to my chamber, that I might be alone whilst I wrote, for I was much moved, and the tears were standing in mine eyes, and my bosom laboured with a weight of feelings not to be suppressed.

I took the pen into my hand, and I wrote with inconceivable rapidity. Three pages were speedily covered, and then I crossed them, and I said a number of things, all signifying nothing ; then I signed my name to this precious document, and

tried to read what I had been writing, but I could scarcely decipher the characters, and what I did decipher, was so extravagant, so meaningless, and so confused, that it might have gone far, in any court of justice, to prove the fact of my insanity. This letter I immediately destroyed, and began another, which was too formal, too cold, too artificial ; this I tore to pieces, and then I commenced a third, which pleased me no better than its forerunners. Then again I wrote, "*my dear Sir,*" but I could not think of an apt beginning, so I opened Anstruther's letter, and read it over once more from beginning to end ; and whilst I was racking my brain for an exordium, I looked at the envelope, and at the seal, without any definite intentions. There was something, however, in the seal, that particularly attracted my notice. It was a coat-of-arms, and I thought that I had seen the quarterings thereof before ; the wax was broken, but I put the pieces together, and then scrutinized the minute figures impressed upon them very closely. I was positive that I had somewhere seen those armorial bearings before. I pondered, and taxed my memory,—then looked again at the seal,—I *had* seen those figures before, and under peculiar circumstances ; those three lions rampant, and the boar's head, and the fleur-de-lis, they were familiar to me ; but where had I seen them ? I asked myself many a time in vain.

But at length the truth flashed upon my brain ; and starting up, I moved across the room, and knelt before a large box. My heart almost stood still, and my hand trembled so violently, that it was some time before I could unlock the chest, and take from it a little book, with which I returned to the writing table ; and then again I seated myself down, and looked at the mysterious seal.

The little book was the copy of Erasmus' Colloquies, with which Mrs. Moore had presented me, and wherein I had discovered the fifty-pound note so strangely inserted between its pages.

I opened it ; perhaps it will be remembered that there was the engraving of a coat-of-arms within the cover of the volume. One glance was sufficient to assure me, that the armorial bearings upon the seal, and in the book, were precisely identical. I compared them, there was not a shade of difference ; and, moreover, the initials E. A. were in the book, and my friend's name was Edwin Anstruther.

And this little book, this copy of Erasmus, had actually belonged to Anstruther ! How passing strange !—how inextricably interwoven seemed all the circumstances relating to the Moores. I asked myself “ Can it be possible that he, Edwin Anstruther, has any knowledge of my humble friends ? ” Then I answered, “ It may be ; yes, it may be ;

and I will ask him ; I will put the question to him at once ; I will say to him, ‘ Mr. Anstruther, can you throw any light upon the obscurity which now envelopes the history of the Moores ? Did you know General Kirby ? do you know Mrs. Moore ? ’ ” And then a wild fancy entered my brain, which was extinguished almost as soon as it was conceived ; and I said to myself, “ No, this cannot be ; for he has himself told me that he is childless.”

Then a season of calmer reflection ensued ; and it occurred to me that, without any agency of romance, this little volume of Erasmus’ Colloquies might have passed from Mr. Anstruther into the possession of Mrs. Moore. Books and horses change their owners more frequently than any other description of property. Almost every book-collector, in the course of his life, has five or six different libraries ; it is the delight of a bibliomanist to sell off, and to collect anew ; besides, duplicate copies find their way into the market from all the first libraries in England, even from that of the British Museum. It was certainly a singular coincidence, that this volume should have passed into my hands ; but, perhaps, there is scarcely a collector in the world, who has not stumbled, in the shops of the dealers, upon many books, which have erst belonged to his most intimate friends ; and had I lived a few years longer

in the world, I should have been less surprised by this "coincidence." But youth is the season of "the marvellous :"—as we grow older, we cease to wonder, even at that which is really wonderful ; we pass from Fairy-land, into a world of commonplace, and I cannot say that we gain much by the change.

But I thought to myself, there can be no harm in just asking Mr. Anstruther, whether he knows the name of Kirby or of Moore ; and, having arrived at this conclusion, I once more began to write.

CHAPTER X.

THE TALENT MULTIPLIED.

"He who risks nothing will gain nothing ever ;
I cannot think it wise to garner up
Our merchandize and never put to sea.
Men may be over-cautious.—I have dared,
And a great triumph has just crowned my darings."

MS.

"GERARD, dear, have you lost any thing?" said my cousin Emily, as she met me in the hall, about two hours after the receipt of my letters.

"Oh! yes, Emma, I am just going out to look. I left one of my letters beneath the Birch-tree."

"A letter—and nothing else?" asked my cousin

Emily, looking into my face so archly that I could not help exclaiming,—

“Why, you look whole volumes, my dear Emma.”

“Volumes! Do I look *Bank Notes*? Again I ask, what have you lost?”

I could no longer be in ignorance of her meaning, and I replied, “Why, yes, Emily, I have lost a Bank Note—that is to say, I must have left one beneath the tree, for I cannot find it in my pockets.”

“Oh! a Bank Note—you have lost a Bank Note,” returned my cousin Emily, in her usual playful manner; “but you must identify it, Gerard, before I give it to you; now tell me what was the number?”

“*The number?* Have Bank Notes numbers? Upon my word, Emmy, I don’t know.”

Emily laughed, for child as she was, she knew more about these matters than did I. “So you don’t know the number of the note; then tell me what was its amount?”

“Oh! yes,” I exclaimed, “that I *can* tell you—it was worth thirty pounds.”

“*Thirty!*” said my cousin Emily, folding up the note, “then this belongs to somebody else.”

“Strange,” said I, “but I believe that you are jesting; you pretty, little, dear, playful rogue; and,

Emmy love, hark you, I promise that if you play the cheat any longer, I will punish you, as I did this morning, by smothering you all over with kisses."

"Oh! I don't mind that," replied Emily; "besides, I only speak the truth. If your note was worth but thirty pounds, this cannot well be yours, dear Gerard. Unless, indeed," she added, playfully, "some benignant wood-nymph has descended from the birch-tree, in your absence, and trebled the amount of your money with the addition of a ten pound note."

"What do you mean, Emmy?"

"Have birch-trees any peculiar effect upon the paper money of the Bank of England?"

"You speak in riddles, love. I don't know what you mean; but you are determined to try my patience to-day."

"It is good for you. You are much too impetuous; but you have behaved tolerably well on the whole. So I will tell you at once, Gerard, that I have found beneath the birch-tree, where you were lying in the morning, this letter—the king of France's letter about the Dauphin; with what indignity you have treated it!—and beside it, there was an hundred pound note, which I suppose, was a little acknowledgment from the Prime Minister, for value received, great Gerard."

“ An hundred pound note, Emmy? Oh! show it to me ; you must be in jest.”

“ Nay, Gerard, look at it, then—but you must not take it, for it cannot be yours. If you snatch it, ’twill be highway robbery, or some such heinous offence.”

I looked at the note ; and Mr. Henry Hase had certainly promised to pay me, on demand, the sum of one hundred pounds. It was very strange ; I had lent Anstruther thirty, and he had returned me one hundred pounds.

“ Well, Emmy, I am very much astonished—but this is the first that I have seen of the note ;” and then I told her who had remitted the money, and acquainted her with all that had passed between Mr. Anstruther, and myself.

She pretended to be very much disappointed, and put on a mock expression of mortification.

“ I thought it was from *the* Prime Minister, and it turns out to be from *a* Mr. Anstruther—somebody, that nobody knows.”

“ Nay, Emmy ; not that. Somebody knows Mr. Anstruther, for Lord ——, one of the Cabinet Ministers, has franked his letter to me.”

As she said this, Mr. Pemberton joined us, and I told him the whole history of Mr. Anstruther, and the Bank Note.

“ It is no more than you deserve, Gerard,” said

my kind uncle, "for your excessive generosity; your good Samaritanship, almost I may say;" and the tears glistened in his eyes, as he spoke, "Nothing is more becoming to youth, than *trustiness*, if I may invent such a word. Suspicion, always unlovely, is loathsome in a young person. Let people say that you acted unwisely, if they will—depend upon it, that you acted nobly. Trust in the integrity of your fellows, as long as you can, my dear boy, for this world becomes very barren, as soon as we begin to suspect."

"But, uncle, you do not think that it would become me to retain this money."

"In a moral sense, perfectly—in a conventional, perhaps not."

"And I cannot do wrong by returning it?"

"I am not sure of that," replied my uncle, "by returning it, you may cause pain to another—and it is always wrong to cause pain, when it can be spared without offending against virtue."

And thus I was placed in a dilemma. I did not like to retain the money; and I did not like to return it.

So not wishing to analyze the nature of my obligations with too much subtlety, I said to Mr. Pemberton, "Uncle, I have received a letter, this day, from my good friend Sir Reginald Euston."

“And what says the worthy Baronet?”

“Oh! I will tell you presently.”—And I opened the letter. “Sir Reginald was in Paris when he wrote—”

“And Leonard Kirby?”

I read a little further, and then answered “Leonard is dead.”

I continued to read, and presently I exclaimed, “Oh! what do you think, uncle? Sir Reginald is going to be married.”

“And who the lady to be blessed with such a husband?”

“*Emma Kirby*—the sister of his poor friend, and the daughter of Mrs. Moore, who is one of Sir Reginald’s tenants. How strangely things come to pass—do they not, my dear uncle!”

“Not strangely, but happily and wisely are these events ordered by Providence. The same interposition that has deprived poor Emma of a brother has bestowed upon her the best of husbands. Seldom does God smite us without pouring balm into our wounds.”

“And this too such a special interposition,” I replied—“Destiny—”

“God, Gerard”—

“Forgive me, uncle—I had forgotten your admonishments; but I was going to say that, by this tissue of events, God has not only presented Emma Kirby with the very best of men for a hus-

band, but has restored to her a long lost parent ; for they *must* meet together, mother and daughter, when Sir Reginald takes his bride to the hall."

"And that meeting—" returned my uncle thoughtfully, "will be a painful meeting, and perhaps, better avoided. Yet you say that the widow Moore is a good woman."

"Oh ! one of the best,"—I exclaimed, lifting my eyes from Sir Reginald's letter. Then I added, "Emma Kirby and the baronet were fellow-travellers from London to Paris. Poor Leonard had written to his sister, beseeching her to bless him before he died ; but she was resolved to do more—to *nurse* him—to smooth his dying pillow, and to close the eyes of her brother after death. For this holy purpose she set out for Paris, accompanied only by her maid. On board the Calais steamer Sir Reginald became acquainted with her name ; then he addressed her, and a mutual explanation very soon was exchanged between them. It would have been wonderful if, under such circumstances, love had not sprung up in their hearts. I cannot fancy any situation more likely to engender mutual affection."

"Nor I, Gerard—and the most enduring affection—that which begins with veneration—"

"And sympathy," I added, "where veneration is—and sympathy—love cannot be very far behind."

“ May they be as happy as they deserve to be,” said my uncle ; “ but tell me, Gerard, when are they to be married ? ”

“ Not yet, uncle ; for it would not be becoming, they think, to throw aside the mourning-garment too soon ;—but before the winter, for it is Sir Reginald’s intention to spend his Christmas at the Hall.”

“ And what are they to do in the interim ? ”

“ Emma is living with a friend, a cousin of her father’s, in Paris ; and it is Sir Reginald’s intention to dwell there also ; for he has taken a house, until the celebration of his nuptials.”

“ That is well,” said my uncle Pemberton ; “ and you have a good friend in Sir Reginald Euston. He seems to like you, Gerard ; for he has made you his confidant. ’Tis a good thing to have many friends.”

“ Oh, uncle ! and he is the kindest of men ;—this letter is full of kindness. He promised, before he set out for Paris, that he would exert all his interest to procure me a situation in one of the government-offices. I have for some time been expecting to hear from him ; and now he tells me that he has not been idle in my behalf ; that he has had the choice offered him of two or three situations, all of which he has declined, not thinking that they are good enough for me ; but that,

being well aware that a personal application is always more efficacious than a written one, he recommends my waiting patiently until the winter, when he promises that he will spare no exertion to obtain me the best situation procurable by interest of no ordinary power."

"Then do so, by all means," said my uncle;—"you are young, and a few months' delay cannot be of any serious consequence. I confess, though," he added, with a benevolent smile, "that I am an interested party, and therefore, perhaps, not quite capable of giving the soundest advice: for you must know, Gerard, that neither Emmy nor myself are particularly desirous that you should leave us; and as long as we think that you are happy—and we *do* think so, at present, my dear boy,—we intend to do our best to detain you amongst us:—do we not, Emmy, my dear?"

"Oh, yes!" cried my cousin Emily; "we do indeed; and we *will* keep you, Gerard,—you shall be our prisoner; and if you attempt to escape, I will bind you with chains of adamant, like the captive knight in the story." And then she added, laying both her hands upon my shoulders, and looking beseechingly into my face, "but you do not wish to leave us, I am sure?—we shall have no occasion for the chains."

"For no other chains than those which now

bind me, and they are more enduring than adamant:—fetters of *love*, Emmy, dearest!—and they will not suffer me to escape.”

Then my uncle said, “Gerard, you must not consider yourself as a visitor only in this house.—Why should you *ever* leave us?—Nay, do not misunderstand me: I would not, for the whole world, that you should eat the bread of idleness, my dear boy: I should be your worst enemy, were I to propose such a step.—‘Give a young man a bible and a *calling*, and you have done your best for him,’ said a certain divine. No, Gerard, I was only about to tell you, that my house shall be always to you a home. Your avocations will most probably bring you to the metropolis, and then we will domesticate you here. We love you, Gerard;—Emmy and I, we love you: Emmy, as a brother, and I, my dear boy, as a son. But we will talk over your future prospects more at length, by and bye. In the meantime, at all events, you must promise to abide with us ’till Sir Reginald returns.”

My heart was too full to answer,—I looked the gratitude that I could not speak; and having pressed my uncle’s hand, and kissed Emily on the forehead, I left the room that I might give vent to my feelings in the solitude of my own chamber, and offer up my thanksgivings to God.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PUPPET-WIRES.

“ ————— Well, now, my fortune's made ;
I shall walk proudly with my head in the air ;
Who says I am not great ? Why duck ye not,
When I pass by ; I am the ripest wit
That ever trod *Paul's* walk ; I pray ye, gentlemen,
Not to forget my merits.”

Old Play.

THAT night before I addressed myself to sleep, I wrote two letters—one to Mr. Anstruther, and the other to Sir Reginald Euston. Both were expressive of the most heartfelt gratitude. To the former I returned the surplus money that he had sent me, merely saying that there was some mistake, and promised at some future period to visit him at Charlton Abbey. I then asked him, for I was fully determined to investigate, if there were any,

the mystery of the Erasmus, whether he had ever known General Kirby, "because," I added somewhat deceptively, "his son died the other day at Paris, and Sir Reginald Euston, my kind friend, has betrothed himself to Miss Kirby, the sole surviving child of the General, and they are to be married at the latter end of the autumn." I did this that Mr. Anstruther might not think that the question I had put to him was dictated by any more cogent feeling than that of a common curiosity to ascertain whether one's friends are acquainted with one another; and my intimacy with Sir Reginald Euston rendered the inquiry a perfectly natural one.

Having put this question to Mr. Anstruther, I proceeded to answer one he had put to me. Could he help me? Was there any possible means whereby he might render me a service? To this I replied in the affirmative — "Yes, my dear Sir," thus I wrote, "you can serve me; and willingly do I accept your kind offer of assistance, advanced, as I am sure it is, with so much sincerity. You say that you have interest in the *literary* world; it is to this quarter that my desires turn themselves, for I have often hoped to distinguish myself as an author. I dare say that you are not ignorant of the difficulties which impede the progress of a young writer along the paths of fame — the many extraneous circumstances which are the making or

the undoing of the young aspirer — circumstances, which have often prostrated the traveller at the very outset of his journey to the land of promise, which he sees afar-off, and pants eagerly to reach. But to speak more definitely, my dear sir, — I have written and am now correcting a work of fiction which I am desirous to lay before the world, should it be deemed by competent judges worthy of such a distinction? Can you introduce me to a publisher, who will attend to me, and cause my manuscripts to be read, and publish them if worthy of publication. By doing this you will confer on me an infinite obligation; for you will satisfy by this act of kindness the desire nearest to my heart. How very good of you to offer thus to befriend one of whom you know so little as myself!”

Not many days after the transmission of this letter, I received a communication from Mr. —, one of our most eminent Metropolitan Publishers. He understood that I had a work of fiction ready for the press, and he requested the honour of introducing it to the world. Would I favour him by forwarding the MSS. to his address, that he might place them immediately in the hands of his reader, though he added that there could be little doubt of their merits, as they had been recommended to his attention by one of the first scholars of the day.

“ Blessings wait on thee, thou kind-hearted

man ! — my generous patron, Anstruther !” I exclaimed. My heart overflowed with gratitude. My first impulse was immediately to set out for Charlton Abbey, that I might throw myself at the feet of my benefactor, and kiss the hem of his garment. But I remembered that my presence was required in the metropolis, and I resolved at once to call upon Mr. —, with my MSS., thinking that I should cause greater pleasure to Anstruther, by acquainting him with the happy results of his kindly intentions towards me. This I did. With the two first volumes of my book, I waited upon my friendly publisher, who received me with the utmost urbanity and kindness, complimenting me upon my extreme youth, and prophesying my future celebrity. He put into my hands some sheets of an unpublished work by one of our most celebrated authors, and requested me to amuse myself by perusing them, whilst he just glanced at the contents of my manuscripts.

I took the papers into my hand, but I read not a single line; for I was in a woeful state of nervous excitement, and I could not take my eyes off the face of the publisher, whilst he was turning over the pages of my manuscripts. I watched every change upon his countenance in an agony of tremulous suspense. I was never less composed in my life. My temples throbbed, and all my pulses galloped, and my teeth chattered as though I had been

seized with an ague fit. But this torture endured not very long. The bookseller in less than a quarter of an hour rose from the table where he was sitting, unlocked a writing-desk, and took therefrom a small slip of paper, his face wearing all this time an aspect of peculiar benevolence.

What could he be about? — I watched him with straining eyes; he was writing something upon the slip of paper that he had taken from his desk. But perhaps, after all, it related not to me, perhaps, merely a memorandum of some thoughts that had accidentally flashed across his mind. But no; for his pen was stopped suddenly, and he said, “Mr. Doveton, will you favour me with your christian name?”

My voice was almost inaudible, as it faltered out “Gerard.”

“Gerard, or Gerald?” asked the bookseller.

“Gerard.”

“Then I hope Mr. Gerard Doveton will suffer me to publish his manuscripts, and accept this note as a small return for the favour he will confer on me by so doing.”

And so saying, the bookseller put into my hands the slip of paper on which he had been writing.

I looked at it; and I saw that the letters upon it were partly in print and partly in my manuscript; but my brain swam round so dizzily, that it was some time before I could decipher the cha-

racters. At length I read something about "paying Gerard Doveton, Esq. or bearer, the sum of three hundred pounds."

I started with surprize, and exclaimed eagerly, "You don't mean to say, Mr. —, that my MSS. are worth *this*!"

"We are not much in the habit," replied the bookseller with a smile, "of giving more money for manuscripts than they are worth. If you are contented with your bargain, I can assure you that I am well satisfied with mine."

"But," said I, "you have not read them — you do not know what the book contains. Had you not better take time to consider this far too liberal offer?"

Then the bookseller still smiling, replied, "Authors, I assure you, Mr. Doveton, are not wont to be so scrupulous as this."

"Nor publishers so liberal," said I.

"Never fear," returned Mr. —, "that a young author, in a negotiation of this kind, will get the better of an old bookseller. No, Mr. Doveton, you need not alarm yourself on my account; depend upon it that I am quite safe."

"You shall be that;" said I, "for if the work do not pay —"

"Good morning," interrupted the bookseller, "let me have the third volume as soon as possible — good morning to you — oh! it's sure to pay;

you need not distress yourself — good morning — I will send you the proofs by the twopenny,"—and the worthy publisher quitted the room, resolutely determined not to hear another word from my mouth concerning the bargain, that I considered so detrimental to his interests, and so advantageous to mine. So I sallied forth into the streets, scarcely knowing whither I went, with mingled feelings of astonishment, pride, gratitude and joy. Could it be possible that a boy of nineteen had written a book worth three hundred pounds? I asked myself this question again and again; and when I recurred to what had just passed in the bookseller's parlour, I could not help thinking that there had been some juggle practised upon me — that I was labouring under a delusion of mind, and that the bookseller had not given me the three hundred pounds;—but there was the cheque in my waistcoat pocket; I took it out and read what was written upon it; and there was the Banker's name, and my name, and Mr. ——'s name, — it was very certain that the money was mine.

My proper course lay westward; but I was journeying on towards the city, in a state of rather pleasant abstraction. I was already a great man in embryo, I was the author of 'Drayton, the Dreamer.'

I had just received three-hundred pounds for an intellectual creation, so entirely my own, that no one but myself had ever looked upon its pages;

the sun of my fame would soon appear above the horizon, and dazzle the whole world; unassisted and alone I had accomplished all this—nay, neither unassisted nor alone,—without Austruther, what should I have been? *Quisque suæ faber fortunæ*: every man the architect of his own fortune;—yes, the architect; and I had modelled, but I required the agency of others to build—but the word *faber* signified a workman, not a designer—was Sallust then right, when he put these words together?—but *was* Sallust the author of this aphorism?—oh! yes, it was certainly Sallust—no, it was Appius as quoted by Sallust—“*id verum esse, quod in carminibus Appius ait, fabrum esse suæ fortunæ.*” It was Appius then; but Sallust confirms the truth of it—*id verum esse*. But I neither agreed with Appius the poet, nor with Sallust the historian; and it was not presumption in me to differ from them; for I was Doveton the Novellist; and I questioned whether either Appius or Sallust had received three hundred pounds for a work.

And thus I went on soliloquizing, first on one subject, then on another—speculating, devising, looking forward with the eye of hope, or retrospectively with the eye of memory, quite wrapped up in a shroud of thought, for I was insensible to the goings on of the visible world, and I knew not whether I was traversing a crowded thoroughfare, or a desert plain. Now, Mr. Godwin has said in

his *Enquirer*, and I will quote the passage, though I am well aware that the author of the *Pursuits of Literature* has laughed it to scorn with an excess of ridicule, which is in itself ridiculous. Mr. Godwin says, that a man of genius walking from Temple Bar to Hyde Park Corner, "gives good scope to his imagination. He laughs and cries. Unindebted to the suggestions of surrounding objects, his whole soul is employed. He enters into nice calculations ; he digests sagacious reasonings. He imagines, he declaims or describes, impressed with the deepest sympathy, or elevated to the loftiest rapture. He makes a thousand new and admirable combinations. He passes through a thousand imaginary scenes, tries his courage, and tasks his ingenuity. He consults, by the aid of memory, the books he has read, and projects others for the future instruction and delight of mankind." It is very certain that I did all this and more, as I walked, after my interview with Mr. ———, the publisher, eastward, through the streets of the metropolis, and it is certain also, that at this period of my life, I regarded myself as a man of genius, and I actually had all those erratic propensities which are common to an overbearing imagination. For example, at the time which now my history has reached, I was walking in precisely a contrary direction to that in which my proper course was lying ; and men of genius generally consider it

necessary to lose their way now and then, not so much in the streets of a metropolis, as in the crowded thoroughfares of life. I do believe that many great luminaries have gone astray, to keep up their character, as though virtue and genius never went hand-in-hand: but these gentlemen, indeed, arrogate to themselves a peculiar description of intelligence, the chief office of which, is to run counter to common sense; for they who aspire to genius, lay no claims whatever to wisdom—a quality indeed which they very much despise, deeming that it is only becoming to doctors of divinity, duennas, and judges, to be wise. I have scarcely ever read the biography of one of these “geniuses” that has not been a miserable record of all kinds of folly. And what is “a man of genius?” I have heard it said,—“So-and-so is a profound thinker, a man of extreme erudition, a subtle analyst, a most elegant scholar, but he is not ‘a man of genius.’” Is Mr. Wordsworth a man of genius? “Oh! no,” says a young disciple of the lose-your-way-in-strange-places school, “Mr. Wordsworth is a great and original thinker, but he is not a ‘man of genius.’” Who then are the men of genius? “Oh! Byron, Rousseau, Alfieri, Shelley, and men of that calibre, my good Sir.”

But to my story. I was walking eastward; like the renowned Chrononhotontologos, with,—

My cogitative faculties immersed
In cogibundity of cogitation,

when suddenly I felt a hand upon my shoulder, whilst at the same time a well-known voice exclaimed, "How d'you do, Doveton? where are you going now?"

It was Smith.—I awoke as from a dream, and shook my friend cordially by the hand. I was certainly very glad to see him.—"Which way are you going, Doveton?" said he.

"To Piccadilly."

"And a strange route you are following!" returned Smith. "Walking eastward along the Strand, with Temple Bar staring you in the face, you tell me that you are going to Piccadilly."

"Well, to be sure, I am all wrong. How stupid of me! I quite forgot myself, and which way I was going—but I am in no hurry, I will walk with you.—How came you in London?"

"Long vacation—start for Liverpool to-night. But tell me, have you heard from Anstruther?"

"Yes."

"And he has sent you the money?"

"He has—a hundred pound-note. You see that I was right after all."

"Perhaps not.—I dare say, my dear fellow, that the note he has sent you is a forgery."

"Good God!—Smith," I exclaimed, quite angry, "the demon of suspicion has entered your soul."

“And yet I am not always in error.”

“I don’t know, Smith — you have been singularly unfortunate in your surmises of late. Here is a gentleman of elegant address, one of the first scholars in the kingdom, a large landed proprietor, and a friend of his Majesty’s Ministers; you set him down as a sharper and a forger, and tell me that I am his dupe, when, indeed, I am most deeply indebted to him.”

“A regular flare-up, as the fast men say at Oxford — but tell me what has he done to make you so deeply indebted to him?”

“He has introduced me to Mr. —, the great publisher, and Mr. — has given me three hundred pounds for ‘the worthless manuscripts of a boy of nineteen.’”

Then Smith after a few moments’ silence, returned, “I confess, Doveton, that I *have* been, as you say, ‘singularly unfortunate in my surmises.’ I am very glad to find that I have been in error, and I congratulate you most sincerely upon the fortunate up-shot of your adventure. You have made a friend of the *real* Mr. Anstruther; and he, I need scarcely tell you, is a first-rate man, for you appear to be well acquainted with his qualifications. And so you are to appear in the world of letters, with Mr. —’s name on your title page.”

“I am — do you know, Smith, I have been

labouring for some time past under very erroneous impressions with regard to the publishing fraternity. I took them to be a wary, hard-bargaining sort of men, and I find them, instead of this, the most liberal set of fellows in the world."

Smith smiled a smile of incredulity, and I continued, "Well, at all events, I have found one liberal publisher."

But still Smith smiled, "What! don't you believe me?" said I.

"I fully believe the fact; but not exactly the inference you have drawn from it."

"And why not? — if Mr. —— has given three hundred pounds for the first work of an inexperienced boy, he is certainly a most liberal man. The inference is perfectly just."

Smith was silent. It was evident that he suspected something, but that he did not like to declare his suspicions. "Now tell me, Smith, what do you mean by that smile of incredulity — speak out, if you suspect anything; pray tell me at once — I suppose another 'unfortunate surmise' — Mr. —— has given me a forged note, and he is a sharper like Mr. Anstruther. Eh! Smith?" and I began to banter the man of sense most unmercifully.

Then at length Smith, his patience, for which he was so remarkable, beginning to desert him, exclaimed, "The fact is, that Mr. Anstruther, not Mr. ——, has given you this money."

“What do you mean?”

“Precisely what I say. You have a friend behind the curtain.”

“And by Apollo!” I thought to myself, though I did not like to acknowledge the suspicion, “I believe that you are right, John Smith, though without you this would never have occurred to me.”

CHAPTER XII.

GOLD DUST.

" Commerce has set the mark of selfishness,
The signet of its all-enslaving power
Upon a shining ore, and calls it gold ;
Before whose image bow the vulgar great—

* * * *

Gold is a living *god*, and rules in scorn
All earthly things but virtue."

SHELLEY.

My book was soon finished, and in the hands of the printers, who were anxious to bring it out before the close of the London season. I did not say a word to my uncle upon the subject of my literary venture ; for I thought it would be better to spare him all participation in my pain and disappointment, in the event of my work proving a failure ; and I did not think it at all improbable that such a catastrophe was awaiting it, for Smith's

allusion to "a friend behind the curtain," had entirely dispersed the mist of pleasant delusion that had surrounded me, and I no longer regarded myself as a successful young author, receiving for his first work three hundred pounds from a wary publisher; it was too plain that latent interest had been working in my favour, and that, however ridiculous and imbecile my work may have been, it would still have brought the three hundred pounds to my treasury.

Yet Smith's surmises, I thought, may have been erroneous; and I could not act upon any such conjecture, nor return Anstruther the money as I had done upon a former occasion. So I merely wrote to him, detailing the issue of my interview with the bookseller, and pouring out a thousand expressions of gratitude to my generous and kind-hearted patron. When I had dispatched this letter, I said to myself, "I will devote this money to the Moores."

I had nearly four hundred pounds in my possession, but I did not know how to dispose of it in a manner most serviceable to my friends. Should I procure with it a situation for Michael, or purchase an annuity for Mrs. Moore, or give them the money at once to dispose of as they deemed best? I could not consult my uncle, for then I must have told him the whole history of my literary adventures, which I was not desirous to do; so after

pondering, and devising schemes, and balancing one thing against another, I resolved that I would at once remit the money to Mrs. Moore, and enable her to do with it as she pleased, well assured that she would dispose of it in a way advantageous to her children.

So retaining only thirty pounds for myself, I paid the remainder of my treasure into the Bank, and procured a bank post bill to the amount thereof; this I inclosed in a blank cover, and my cousin Emily directed it for me, as I was most anxious that my friends should not know who was their benefactor. This done, I put the letter myself into *the* General Post-Office, saying, "There can now be no clue, whereby the gift is traceable to me."

But I had previously written to Michael, informing him of my successful negotiation, and promising that I would send him a copy of my book, directly it was out of the hands of the printer; and Michael had replied to this letter immediately, foretelling my future fame, and saying, how proud they all were of being my humble friends. Ella too had added a few words to the letter;—"I told you that you could not fail; and was I not a prophetess, Gerard?"

Before many days had elapsed, I received another letter from Michael, containing the history of the bank post bill, and all their surmises concern-

ing it. Nothing could shake Mrs. Moore's conviction, that her lost son Larry was their unseen benefactor; and this full assurance seemed likely to irradiate with a broad sun-light the obscurity of her soul. "My mother's faith," thus wrote Michael Moore, "is so strong, and so cheering, that neither Ella nor I have breathed a syllable that may weaken it. 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,' she exclaimed, when she beheld the note and the blank cover containing it,—'for my son is treading the paths of prosperity, and though absent from me, I feel that he is happy.' It is a blessed thing, indeed, for my mother, that such a belief should have entered her soul. But we, dear Gerard, Ella and I, think, nay, we know otherwise. *You* are our benefactor. It is so like you to do a kindness, and to be unwilling that they, whom you serve, should feel beholden to you. Ella declares that nothing can ever persuade her to think otherwise. She is sure that you have done this, and in truth, so am I, dear Gerard."

And here I must confess, that with all my generosity, I should have felt rather disappointed if they had not suspected me to be their latent benefactor. I had sent the money thus mysteriously, to insure myself against having it returned to me; but, though I was determined that they should not *know* me to be the donor of it, I should have been

rather hurt if they had not *suspected* me. And this feeling was not so pitiful and ungenerous as it may appear to be at first, for it originated in my excessive love for Michael and Ella, and my desire to feel myself beloved by them in turn. If I had doted on them less, it would have been a matter of indifference to me whether they had suspected me or not, for I do not crave after the praise and gratitude of the herd ; but loving them so deeply, and yearning so intensely after their love, I felt that not to suspect me, would be not to love, or at least not to love me so entirely as I desired to be loved ; for any act of kindness and generosity done towards us by an invisible agent, we are wont to attribute always unto him whom we think most kind, and whom we most love for his kindness. Thus it was that my heart rejoiced when I knew that Ella and Michael Moore suspected me to be their benefactor.

But Michael's letter contained other matter than this—matter, indeed, which made the pulses of my heart throb with unwonted rapidity. He had remembered something more of his early days, and he hastened to communicate to me the remembrance. And thus he wrote : “ I promised to tell you if any new reminiscences should rise up in my mind. The other day it happened that I was at ——mouth,” (this was a little sea-port town, a few miles distant from Grass-hill); “ and

I had been sketching—my book was in my hand, when, seeing some fishermen put out to sea, I requested them to take me into their boat, that I might view the appearance of the land from the water, and make a drawing of the town, and the bay, and the distant scenery. Willingly did the fishermen suffer me to accompany them, but we had not long been at sea, before a violent squall came on, and for a period our little craft was actually in imminent peril. Well, dear Gerard, in the midst of this commotion of the elements, it suddenly flashed across my memory, that I had once before, in the early days of my childhood, been thrown into a similar embarrassment. There is a strange power in association to awaken dormant reminiscences, and if it had not been for this little incident of the squall, and the fishing boat, I should never have remembered the storm at sea, which endangered my life when I was an infant. But now I can recall, with much vividness, the ship and the swollen ocean—the rain, the thunder, the lightning, the noise and confusion there was on board—and all the circumstances attending a tempest, if not a wreck. Indeed, Gerard, I think that our vessel went to pieces, and that another came to our rescue. This was some time before we came to Grass-hill; but what passed in the interim, I have tasked my memory in vain to re-

member. Ella remembers nothing of this, but she is a year younger than myself, and a year at this early period of life, makes a great difference in all our retrospections. I attach no great importance to this reminiscence ; it seems to throw no additional light upon the darkness which we are so anxious to pierce ; but time, time, dear Gerard, I will be patient and abide my time."

But, I thought, as I continued to read, that many strange and uncertain longings had entered poor Michael's breast. It was plain to me, that a sort of aristocratic instinct was smouldering within him, and that he was yearning after a better state, a more exalted condition. "He is weary of his peasant life," thought I ; "but he is striving, with all his might, to stifle the cravings of his soul. Beneath all his thoughtful serenity there is lurking a troubled spirit, which day and night he wrestles against in vain. He is calm, because he *will* be calm ; but his calmness is artificial ; and nature, within him, is stronger than art. What are all his dreams of palaces, and garden-walks, but the aspirations of a soul, panting to emerge from the obscurity of a cottage life, and only contented upon principle ? By faith alone is he sustained ; for he believes that his time will come ; but little knows he what I know, or his heart would beat quicker than it does, and his faith increase tenfold in strength." And as thus

I soliloquized, I set forth upon one of my almost daily excursions to the great metropolis.

I frequently visited the Printing-office, and I did not find the printers so troublesome a set of people as they are represented. I behaved courteously towards them, and in turn they did their utmost to please me. I exacted little, and therefore I obtained much. I am always very urbane and tolerant towards my inferiors; and, if ever I am hard and uncompromising, it is towards them who consider themselves superior to me. This is by no means an uncommon trait; and I think that it originates in pride—not in frothy, superficial, arrogance, but in genuine, deep-seated pride. An arrogant man is imperious, a proud man condescending, towards the lowly. The one despises those beneath him, the other hates those above him. The proudest men are the kindest to their inferiors; they love the poor for being poor, and they are most courteous towards those whom it is the greatest condescension to favour. Arrogance loves to trample upon,—Pride, to patronize, the humble. I was a proud man; I certainly was not an arrogant one.

So week after week passed away; my work was advertised, with certain preliminary flourishes, which, I must say, rather disgusted me. But I bore the infliction with the most exemplary patience, until my forthcoming volumes were sur-

mised in an evening paper to be the work of "a noble lord distinguished for his oratorical displays," a statement which startled me very much, and sent me off in a towering passion to my publisher, who very coolly informed me that all these preliminary puffs were good for the sale of my work. As I had sold my manuscripts to Mr. —, I had no interest in the fraud he was practising, and on this account it suddenly occurred to me that I had no right to interfere with his arrangements, as the book was his, and he had the legitimate power to do whatever he pleased with it. So I said to him, "And pray Mr. —, how much do these paragraphs cost you?"

"Half-a-guinea a-piece," replied the bookseller, "and it's money well laid out."

"And how many copies of a book do you think each puff enables you to sell?"

"I cannot calculate; but without advertising we should not sell a single copy."

"Well, then, advertise to your heart's content; but oblige me, Sir, by not departing from the truth in these preliminary flourishes. I cannot bear it, I cannot indeed,—to see my volumes surmised to be the work of "a noble and eloquent lord," and to know all the time that the surmise emanates from your back parlour. I give you my honour, Mr. —, that if you advertise any more false reports, I'll contradict them flatly in the papers."

“It’s the common way of doing business,” replied the publisher; “we should do nothing without first of all awakening the curiosity of the town. I assure you, Sir, that all the first authors of the day have submitted to this in turn. I can assure you, Sir——”

But I was not to be assured; and my choler was abundantly excited by the extreme coolness of the man of books. “Look you, Sir,” said I in a loud voice,—“if you are not satisfied with your bargain, I am willing to refund the money you have paid me.” (This I could not have done if the bookseller had taken me at my word.) “I tell you, Sir, that I will not be the means of enabling you to practise a fraud upon the public. Issue as many false reports as you please,—say that my volumes are the work of an earl, a duke, an archbishop, what you will,—say that they have been committed to the flames on account of their extreme pungency,—say that you have been offered three thousand pounds to suppress my harmless manuscripts,—say anything you please, Mr. ——, but, by Jupiter, I will contradict what you say.” And having said this, I bounced out of the room, Mr. —— calling after me, “Well, Sir—I was doing this for your good; but have your own way, young gentleman, have your own way.”

And I did have my own way. I wish certain

authors, that I could name, would act as I acted upon this occasion.

From the house of my publisher I went direct to the printing-office, where they gave me the last proof of my last volume, and asked me for the preface and dedication. The "reader," as he is called, of this establishment, was a shrewd, sensible, well-informed man, who had received an excellent education, and had once been in better circumstances. This individual was of considerable service to me, for he suggested many emendations as my work passed through the press, and there was a great deal of subtlety, and sometimes of profoundness, in his criticisms. He was well acquainted with all the goings-on of the Literary world, and he told me very many things 'undreamt of in my philosophy.' One day I was alluding in his presence to the probable reception my work would meet with from the different critical publications; and I was very much astonished by his exclaiming, without the least hesitation,—“Oh! you will be plastered (praised) in the * * *, slightly abused in the * * *, and utterly *squashed* in the * * *. D—— will damn you with faint praise; B—— say what he thinks of you, and J—— will lay on his praises inch-deep with a trowel.” I was very much astonished at this, and with a smile of incredulity, I replied

“ But how on earth do you know this before the books are sent to them for review.”

“ Oh ! they review booksellers, not books,” said the reader.

“ What do you mean ?”

“ Oh ! simply this—one review, perhaps, is our own property, and of course our own review speaks well of our own books; then we have a share in another, and with a third we advertise largely; a fourth is the rival of our review, and therefore it abuses our books; a fifth is conducted by a gentleman, whose manuscripts we have several times refused; with a sixth we do not advertise—a most unpardonable offence—and so on; in this manner I might run through the whole list of periodicals, and show how each one is affected by and towards our establishment. But, I have said enough of this, Mr. Doveton. To whom do you dedicate your book ?”

“ Oh ! to Mr. Anstruther—certainly to Mr. Anstruther,” I exclaimed. “ Give me a pen ;” and I wrote, “ To Edwin Anstruther, Esq., of Charlton Abbey, these volumes,” &c. &c., with all the usual formulæ of a dedication.

“ And so Mr. Anstruther is a friend of yours, Sir ?” said the ‘ reader,’ as he glanced at my dedication.

“ Indeed he is, and the best of friends; and do you know him too ?”

“ I once knew him very well,” said the ‘ reader.’

“ And how long is it since you were acquainted with him ?” I asked, endeavouring, with all my might, to appear as little concerned as possible.

“ I knew him sixteen years ago : he then held an appointment under the vice-regent, in Ireland. He was regarded in the political world as one of the most rising young men of the day. He had great talents, and he was very rich. I was his private secretary and librarian.”

“ His private secretary ?”

“ Yes ; for though he was only a secretary, he required very much assistance. Not that the duties of his office were very arduous, but that his mind was remarkably active ; and Mr. Anstruther was constantly engaged upon some literary undertaking or other. His secret influence was very great ; and the government, which he served, regarded him as one of their most useful supporters. He was one of the most admired writers in the — Review ; and he is the author of several works, which it would be a breach of confidence in me to name, Mr. Doveton.”

“ He had a wife ?”

“ He had, sir ; and she was—oh, so beautiful !—The loveliest creature I have ever seen upon the face of the earth was Mrs. Anstruther.”

“ And she had children ?”

“ She had, sir ; *three*—two boys and a girl.”

“And now they are all dead,” said I; “the mother, and the three children?”

“Yes,” said the ex-secretary; “all dead.—They were drowned on their passage to England; the mother, and her three children.”

“This must have been a severe blow to Mr. Anstruther?”

“It was, indeed. He resigned his office, accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, and immediately quitted the country. He remained abroad several years: some said that he had gone mad; others, that he had died of the plague at Constantinople; his family were beginning to dispute about his property; when suddenly he re-appeared in England, took possession again of Charlton Abbey, and there, to the best of my knowledge, he has been residing ever since. I have not seen him, but I have heard that he is indeed sadly altered—quite a wreck of his former self.”

“He is in wretched spirits,” said I;—“but, tell me, what age were his children?”

“The eldest, as far as I can remember, would have been about nineteen, had he lived; the next, a boy, was a year younger; and the girl, a year younger than him.”

“Ha!—Now tell me, Mr. Wilson, did you ever know one General Kirby—or Colonel Kirby, rather?—did you ever see him at the house of Mr. Anstruther?”

“ I do not remember the name. I think that I can say, certainly, he was never at Mr. Anstruther’s table whilst I dwelt in his house.”

“ Well, Mr. Wilson, you will look to the dedication;—it requires some taste to spread out a dedication well. Let some part of it be in old English characters, and let me see it before you go to press.” And having said this, I quitted the printing-office, reflecting upon the history of Mr. Anstruther.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW.

Busy opinion!—will you bow to that?—
A thing which takes all forms, a mountebank,
A very Proteus, acting now contempt,
Now charity, now wearing a dark robe
Of cruellest injustice ; yesterday
Opinion ranked you with the gods ; to-morrow
You will be styled a worm——
Trust me, to *be* is better than to seem :
Be wise and fear not.

MS.

My book came out in the middle of July—not too late, as my publisher told me, for London purchasers, and just in the right season for the watering-place libraries, — without the assistance of which, novel-writing would be a most unprofitable occupation ; — and therefore I had taken the tide, which leads on to fortune, at the flood. My friend Smith was at this time in London ; for he was paying a round of visits to his metropolitan friends.

I well remember one Saturday—the first after the appearance of my book,—that I had asked Smith to dine with me at an hotel; for I had determined to sleep that night in London, as I was going, I believe, to the Opera. Smith came at the appointed hour, and found me striding up and down the room, to all appearance in a violent passion. “And what is the matter now?” asked Smith.

“The matter!—just look at that paper;—do they call that criticism? Some confounded paltry hireling, who would traduce his own father for sixpence, has fallen foul of my book with all the abusive epithets he can muster. Criticism!—do they call that criticism? Now, I give you my honour, Smith, that there is not a word of truth in what he says.”

“Of course not.”

“He has garbled all the passages that he has quoted—distorted all my meanings—called my characters by their wrong names—represented them doing things which I have never made them do—and altogether mistaken, wilfully I think, the tendency of my unfortunate work. The fellow says that it is mischievous, when I positively declared that every page exhibits a yearning after the good of my fellow creatures—in short, it is full of philanthropy; and yet this malicious critic says that I am an enemy to mankind.”

“But my good fellow,” returned Smith, “your

book is none the worse for that creature's abuse. It is not a bit the more a failure for his asserting that it is one. There is your book, it is either good or bad in itself; let the critics say of it what they will, they can neither improve its deformities, if it be bad, nor impair its excellences, if it be good. Never mind what they say of it—for they cannot affect the real merits of the work.”

“All that may be very fine,” said I; “but I remember reading in one of the plays of my father's favourite, Marston, a passage, which says,

‘ — all that exists
Takes valuation from opinion,’

and Shakspeare, a better authority still, declares that ‘there's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.’ And Epictetus too—

“Oh! I know all that,” interrupted John Smith; “but a published work is public property; and if you appear on the stage you must prepare to be hissed now and then. I have read your book, and to speak candidly, I think that there is more genius in it than there is in the majority of fictions. Never mind what that fellow says; if I mistake not, he is one of those, who, the printer said, would abuse you.”

“He is—but remember, Smith, that the public take their opinions from the *dicta* of these reviewers.”

“ Oh ! but he is only one of a number—”

“ And yet it is a hard thing,” said I, “ to be cut to pieces in one’s first review.”

“ Not at all—it’s the best thing that could happen—it will harden you ; besides, it will give you a greater zest for more favourable criticisms. Let us try ;”—and Smith took from his pocket another weekly literary paper—“ there now, read that, and you will say that I am a good Samaritan thus to pour oil into your wounds.”

“ Oh ! give it to me—where did you get it ? does this speak well of my work ?”

“ Judge for yourself ; I called at the office, on my way hither, and I read the review of your book as I came along the street.”

I read—and to my infinite delight, I found that this reviewer had lauded me even more than the other had abused me. All the most flattering phrases in the critical vocabulary had been called into service to adulate my work. All the epithets made use of in this criticism were, indeed, the diametrical opposites of those employed in the former review. It was just as though somebody had made a list of *errata* thus ; for *bad* read *good* ; for *feeble* read *powerful* ; for *shallow* read *profound* ; for *coarse phraseology and over-wrought sentiment*, read *grace of diction and subtlety of thought*. Now as I was at that time one of the uninitiated, I was rather startled by these incongruities ; and I

did not find it *very* easy to form a true estimate of my work from the opinions of these antagonist reviewers. "Now," said Smith, "if you were to believe all that the critics say of you, in what a pretty predicament you would be. Your work is a complete triumph; and yet it is a miserable failure. You are a man of genius, an original thinker, a poet, a philosopher, and a philanthropist, yet, nevertheless, you are a shallow coxcomb, a servile copyist, an impotent trifler, and a spiteful coward. Now, I appeal to you, Doveton, is it possible to be all these things at the same time? No, no; my friend, you must not suffer yourself either to be elated or depressed by criticism. Put these two reviews together, the soda of the one neutralizes the acid of the other; and now, my good fellow, to dinner with what appetite you may."

"And a very good one I have too," said I.

But anxious as I was to follow Smith's advice I did not find it a very easy thing to render myself indifferent to criticism. However, "the ayes had it," and almost the whole periodical press was pleased to speak favourably of my work. My publisher told me that I was "selling;" but my success was not remarkably brilliant, until a most elaborate and highly complimentary review of my book appeared in one of our great quarterly publications; and from that hour I was "a made man," and I walked proudly, albeit unknown, amongst

my literary *collaborateurs*. That Anstruther was the writer of this critique I had very little doubt of at the time ; or if he had not written it himself, he had, at all events, caused it to be written. How I loved the man—how full, how over-brimming was the chalice of my heart with gratitude !

I wrote to him, and my letter contained the most exaggerated expressions of thankfulness, mingled with assurances of my devoted affection. I wrote to him, and again I urged the question, hitherto unanswered, concerning his acquaintance with the Kirbys. It was the darling wish of my soul to prove that Michael and Ella Moore were the children of well-born parents. We all know how easy it is to believe that which we desire very much ; and it is a truth, that even at this period I entertained a suspicion, almost amounting to a conviction, that Michael and Ella Moore were the children of Mr. Anstruther. Now, the only connecting link which associated the cottage children of Grass-hill with the proprietor of Charlton Abbey, was, as perhaps the reader remembers, the little volume of Erasmus' Colloquies, with which Mrs. Moore had presented me. In the absence of any more substantial proofs, I had been very willing to grasp at shadows ; and it signified very little to me that Mr. Anstruther had himself told me that all his children were dead, and that Mr. Wilson who was once his secretary, had distinctly ac-

quainted me with the manner of their death. But these, indeed, were barriers, which my imagination easily overleapt; and, I fully believe, that, had Anstruther been a bachelor, I should have been equally convinced that Michael Moore was the heir to his estates. Indeed, as a very strong proof that our wishes are oft the "fathers of our thoughts," I positively declare, that in all these speculations, I never once thought of Lawrence, nor did it ever occur to me for a moment, that *he* was the son of Mr. Anstruther, although I well knew that my patron had been blessed with three children, two boys and a girl; and it was but reasonable to suppose that if Michael and Ella belonged to him, Lawrence must have been in a similar position; but when once a man gives the rein to his imagination, there is no making any calculation as to the strange places into which it will carry him.

Besides, I was well acquainted with the whole history of the Moores. All the doubt and uncertainty, which once enveloped the story of their lives, had been cleared away by the narration of my uncle Pemberton, and I was now fully able to account both for the learning and accomplishments of Mrs. Moore, and for the grace and refinement of her children; a common mind would have been satisfied with this discovery; but I was always building castles in the air, and as my ima-

gination was peculiarly creative, it did not stand in need of much circumstantial evidence to bear upon any case that I was anxious to make out, for where a real basis was wanting, a fictitious one was very speedily established, and I could build up just as towering a structure upon an imaginary as upon an actual foundation. Oh ! indeed there is no architect in the world, who can bear a comparison with fancy.

And Mr. Anstruther replied to my letter. He had never been acquainted with Colonel Kirby ; he thought that he had heard his name mentioned, but he was positive that he had never been introduced to him.

Then Mr. Anstruther, having answered my query, besought me earnestly to pay him a visit. " Oh ! " said he, " since the publication of your book, more than ever have I desired to know you better."

There was no resisting this invitation, so I wrote to Anstruther, fixing a day upon which I promised to appear at Charlton Abbey. " Now," thought I, " if he be the father of my friends, it will be strange, if in a very few months, I do not restore his lost children to his arms."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRAINED HORSES.

“ Who happier for the moment—who more blithe
Than that fallen spirit? In those dreary holds
His talents lending to exalt the freaks
Of merry-making beggars, now enchained
With mute astonishment themselves to see
In their own art undone.”

WORDSWORTH.

It was the first day of October, and my cousin Emily said to me at breakfast, “ Gerard dear, Croydon fair begins to-morrow.”

My uncle smiled and said, “ Emmy, how came you to think of that ?”

“ Oh ! papa, I remember that when I was a very little girl I once went there with you ; besides, I saw a number of carts and caravans passing yesterday, and one of the servants reminded me that to-morrow is the first day of the fair.”

“Shall you go?” said I, addressing myself to Mr. Pemberton.

My uncle, still smiling, replied, “No, Gerard, I do not quite think that it would be a fit place for the Rector of * * *.”

“Do you think that it is wrong, uncle, to visit these places of public amusement?”

“Why,” said my uncle, “if I were to go there, I do not suppose that in my own person I should commit much wrong. But that many evil things are done every year at Croydon Fair is undeniable. In a large assembly of this kind there must be a mixture of good and bad people. That the good preponderate there is very little doubt, but still some wicked persons must be there, for if any be in the neighbourhood, they are sure to frequent the place, where the greatest number of individuals are assembled. I do not think that these fairs are advantageous to the morals of society, for there the vicious exercise their vices, the weak, perhaps, become vicious, and — but, my dear Gerard, I am indulging in a vein of common-place, which you, I know well enough, abhor above all things in the world. You may go to the fair, and I think with impunity, for you are neither vicious nor weak; and so might I, Gerard, but that thereby, perhaps, I might bring my calling into disrepute, and many of my parishioners, who would recognize me, might consider me less

worthy to be their oracle, if they beheld me jostling through a crowd of ostlers, nursery-maids and Addiscombe cadets. And, therefore, my dear boy, I do not think that I shall go to the fair."

"I think that *I* shall though, uncle."

"I see no reason why you should not, if you anticipate any pleasure from the recreation."

"Yes, uncle, I have determined to go — and I shall visit every booth of jugglers, players, and equestrians in the fair."

"What a funny man you are," said my cousin Emily, "I should not have thought with your refined tastes that you could have any relish for such amusements."

"Nor have I, Emmy," said I.

"Then why go?"

"I think that I told you the story of Lawrence Moore — of how he deserted his home, and joined — at least so thinks his mother — a company of strolling equestrians. Now it is possible that I may discover the lost one performing to-morrow at the fair, and having discovered I may reclaim him. Now tell me, uncle, do you not think that I ought to go to Croydon to-morrow?"

"Why I think, Gerard," replied my uncle, with a smile of commendation upon his face, "that with such a motive as this you might go to the fair as safely as to church — indeed, my dear boy, I do."

"May I take Emmy with me?" said I, encouraged by the commendations of my uncle.

But before Mr. Pemberton could reply, my cousin Emily exclaimed, "No, Gerard, I will not go with you."

"Why not, love?"

"My dear Gerard, I would willingly go any where with you, for I know that you would never take me to any place where I ought not to go. But I shall be sadly in your way. If you were only visiting the fair for amusement's sake, with papa's sanction I would accompany you; but as you are going upon a journey of discovery, I think that you had better go alone. You may, perhaps, have to follow up a pursuit, and then what a clog I shall be to your movements. No, Gerard, go alone, and I will stay at home and pray for your success."

"Emmy, love, you are quite right," said my uncle, "I did not think that you were half so discreet."

"Oh! uncle, give it some better name than discretion," I exclaimed, smiling fondly upon my cousin. "I think that if Emmy could render me a great service, were it necessary, she would whistle her discretion to the wind."

And so to the fair I went. It was precisely like all other fairs, and needs no particular description. There was the usual complement to be seen of

ginger-bread and wall-nuts (now just in season)—toys, round-about, and hot sausages. There was the wonted motley congregation of ladies, and nursery-maids with their children, Addiscombe cadets in plain clothes trying to look knowing, dirty boys begging for scrambles, and pick-pockets in top boots. There was of course plenty of amusement for such buoyant spirits as came to the fair for the mere purpose of enjoying themselves—merry-go-rounds, prick-the-garters, wheels-of-fortune, and shy-sticks every where — dwarfs, giantesses and sea-serpents, with their portraits outside their domiciles — and lastly, conspicuous for their magnitude, those emporiums of fun and frolic, the travelling theatres of Messers Richardson and Gyngel, and — oh ! how I rejoiced to behold it there—the equestrian circus of the renowned Mr. Centaur !

I had not forgotten my fearful conflict with the dread manager of this equestrian troop, who, like the hybrid animal, whose name he bore, was, indeed, more a beast than a man. But I was determined, even at the risk of another personal engagement, to prosecute my search after Lawrence Moore ; and thinking of my beloved Ella, I cast out all fear from my nature, and I felt that I had courage and strength.

I entered the booth, paid my shilling, and took a

seat on one of the front benches as near to the circus as possible. The arena was unoccupied, for the performance had not yet commenced. I was glad of this; for I said to myself, "I must preconcert a plan of operation, before I venture to act;" and then I began to cast about in my mind how it would best become me to conduct myself in the event of my ascertaining the fact of Larry's association with the players.

Determined as I was to throw aside all selfishness, and at any risk to reclaim the brother of my sweet Ella, I must, nevertheless, acknowledge that I recoiled from the thought of revealing myself to Lawrence Moore, and of taking part in the scene which would inevitably follow, before such a motley assemblage of disreputable people as I now beheld around me in the booth. "No," thought I, "for both our sakes it had better be done in private."

And as I was still pondering, my next neighbour, a middle-aged, respectably-dressed man, with a plain but very expressive face, and a strange twinkle in his eyes, said to me in a low and rather pleasing voice, "Have you ever attended this circus before, Sir?"

"Never," I replied, "Sir; have you?"

"Often," said my neighbour, — his eyes twinkling so strangely that I almost thought he was

crazed, — “Often, sir — and in divers places during the last year — I may say, sir, that in at least six or seven different localities, I have been present at the equestrian performances of Mr. Centaur’s celebrated troop. Some people call it a company, sir, which is evidently a misapplication — a *troop* of equestrians, but a *company* of players, just as in the army they say ‘a troop of horse,’ but ‘a company of foot.’ I dislike very much, sir, to hear things called by their improper names.”

I said to myself, “Of a certainty this fellow is somewhat crazed.” But it occurred to me at the same time that he might be of service, so I said to him, “But are you not almost tired of seeing the same performances so often?”

“Not at all,” replied my neighbour. “I do not think that I should ever be tired. — It is true that there are a number of fellows here, calling themselves Austrian Herculeases, and American Phenomenons, and of these I am heartily sick — but there are two young performers here, sir, a boy and a girl, whom I would walk barefoot any distance to see.”

“Ah!” — I exclaimed; and then I eagerly asked, “And pray, sir, what may be their names?”

“They call the youth, sir — Signor Laurentio, and the little girl Mademoiselle Beau-pied; but it strikes me that they are both English, and brother

and sister if I mistake not — they have a way, sir, in these troops of giving people strange names; now *Beau-pied* means ‘beautiful foot’ in French, and Laurentio is only the Italian of *Lawrence*.”

As the stranger mentioned the name of *Lawrence*, my heart beat very quick, “Oh! he is here; he must be here,” thought I, “and he is the Signor Laurentio.” It was possible; but in my mind a possibility was soon magnified into a certainty; and I now felt that I was quite sure of soon beholding the lost brother of my beautiful Ella.

But I continued to converse with my neighbour, and I began with an ill-assumed appearance of indifference to ask him a multitude of questions: What age was the youth — what was his aspect — what the colour of his hair — what his height — what his figure? To all of which interrogatories I received answers, which, when put together, made an exact description of my friend Larry Moore.

“But what makes you think,” said I, “that the youth and the little girl are brother and sister?”

“Oh! because he looks so fondly always on the little maiden, and appears to watch her with the utmost anxiety as though he were fearful lest she should hurt herself. And then, sir, they are both so graceful — there is so much harmony in their motions, if I may so express myself, assorting the one with the other so admirably, sir, that it

would be difficult to persuade one's-self, that such an exquisite co-operating sympathy could exist between any but brother and sister. I fear, sir, I am too technical; but I have studied these things professionally; I was a professor of Poetical Attitudinarianism, though I have now retired upon my fortune."

"In other words a posture-master," said I.

"In the language of the vulgar a posture-master," said my neighbour, his little eyes twinkling more than ever, "the intellectual importance of our profession has never yet been duly estimated. We are the mind, sir, to the sculptors hand. We devise, but the sculptor executes; our art, sir, is above sculpture."

"Undoubtedly," said I, "and I think that now I can enter into your reasons for frequenting this circus so constantly. Grace, sir, is the natural aliment of your soul. You delight in all graceful things. You have a mind so attuned to the harmony of motion — the Poetry of Motion, I ought to say," and thus I went on, pouring out more fine words and more recondite nonsense than did Ephraim Jenkinson himself, when he got upon his account of the Cosmogony.

But the little posture-master in spite of his dislike to hearing terms misapplied, was very much delighted with my altisonant phraseology, thinking I suppose that it could not be mis-applied,

as it was all applied to himself. "You have a soul, sir; I see that you have a soul, sir," said he, "and I am sure that you will fully enjoy the intellectual treat that is preparing for you. You will presently be surfeited with grace — when Signor Laurentio and little Beau-pied appear as Zephyr and Aurora. You will have a hard trial to endure though previously, for a number of clumsy fellows begin with their sickening performances — graceless varlets — I should like to chastise them all — but here comes the manager."

And Mr. Centaur appeared in the circus with a foraging cap on his head, and a hussar-jacket upon his brawny shoulders. He carried a long driving whip in his hand, which ever and anon he smacked, making the saw-dust fly about, to the prejudice, as I thought, of my eyes. Then the clown entered, and turned a few somersets, and made a great number of ugly faces, and laughed at his own witticisms, which were almost co-eval with the breed of horses, and certainly with the breed of clowns. Then a number of men in strange dresses came in, and made a human pyramid, of which the Austrian Hercules was the base. Next came a horse, chalked and painted into a pie-bald, cantering into the circus without a rider, and when it had performed two or three circumambulations, the clown threw himself upon its back, sitting with his face towards the tail of the

animal, and making a number of grimaces, which the multitude seemed very much to enjoy. But presently entered the American Phenomenon ; and the clown, demurring not a little in his own quaint style, was soon unhorsed by the Trans-Atlantic equestrian, who now began to exhibit his "unrivalled agility" in what I thought a very clumsy manner. To him succeeded a painted lady upon an old roan horse, and they called her the "Nymph of the floating veil," because she held in her hand a large piece of stiff calicoe, which she twisted into a variety of shapes, none of them much more graceful than herself. And then a boy performed upon the slack-wire, and stood upon his head at the top of a pole ; and when this was over, a man in a blue jacket and straw hat played the part of a drunken sailor so naturally that I almost thought, barring his seamanship, that he was actually what he was trying to seem.

But now they begin to sweep the arena, and to scatter fresh saw-dust upon it. There is a pause, something great is expected ; my neighbour, the little posture-master, touches my elbow, and almost breathless, says to me, " Now, sir," — and the manager, with a smart application of the whip to the padded legs of the clown, cries " Can't you make way there for Signor Laurentio and Mademoiselle Beau-pied ;" whilst I, with a heart throbbing violently, turn my pale face towards the

entrance-door, and bend forward in an attitude indicative of extreme eagerness, my eyes almost bursting from their sockets.

They come!—On a snow-white steed, with a flowing mane, and long curving tail, stood a little girl about thirteen years of age, attired in white drapery, with a pair of delicate blue wings at her back, and a glittering tiara upon her head. Oh! never was there a human creature in the world more full of grace and beauty than this player child. Her little white spangled tunic descended scarcely to her knee, displaying the exquisite proportions of her round, tapering limbs; her arms were bare to the shoulder, and she held them aloft so gracefully, now in one attitude, and now in another, each quite a study for a painter; her little feet, which gained for her the title of Beau-pied, moving about all the while upon the flat surface of the saddle, whilst the well-trained animal which she rode ambled steadily round the circus, and appeared, indeed, to be mindful of the precious burthen which it bore.

And how lovely was the face of the little girl with its oval contour, its singular expressiveness, its delicate features, its lustrous eyes, and the long glossy nut-brown hair which descended from beneath the circlet on her head, and floated in rich clusters adown her back. Oh! too beautiful, and too graceful was she to be gazed at by the rude

multitude infesting a country fair. I could see at once that thus to be gazed at was an agony to her. The poor little thing trembled all over when first she appeared in the arena; I saw her look hurriedly around, and when she beheld the numbers assembled, she turned quite pale, and her countenance worked convulsively; and it was easy to see that the poor little creature was no less timid and sensitive than she was lovely and graceful. I knew her; this was the same pretty child that warned me against the cruelty of Mr. Centaur.

Round and round the circus she rode, varying her graceful attitudes; she held a little wand in her hand, and having waved it thrice in circles above her head, another snow-white steed came bounding into the arena: and upon the animal's back stood a winged youth, with an azure tunic studded with silver; and a scarf of the same cærulean hue—a noble, gallant-looking youth, with dark clustering hair, and bright hazel eyes, and limbs, from which the muscles stood prominently out, but not so prominently as to give any harshness to the outline of a figure, which presented a beautiful, and somewhat rare combination of power and grace. Upholding in one hand a garland of flowers, whilst, with the other, he held the reins of his curvetting steed, he rode up to the little equestrian maiden, and, side by side, they cantered round the arena

together, the youth taking the inner circle, and bending his eyes on the fair child so fondly that it was not difficult to trace the feelings of affection and solicitude, with which he regarded his beautiful companion. And now they come close before me—gracefully winding their arms around each other; I might touch the hem of her garment—how beautiful she is!—and that noble youth—it must be—it is Lawrence Moore.

“Did not I tell you,” whispered the little posture-master, “that you would be almost surfeited with grace. I see that your inmost soul, Sir, is thrilling with beautiful emotions.—Can any thing be more exquisite?—Now look, Sir, see with what infinite grace he places that garland upon her head—and how she looks up into his face smilingly—can any thing surpass that attitude?—Look, now they intertwine their arms, he standing with one foot upon her saddle, and one foot upon his own—now he kneels to her; she bends down gracefully, and, taking the garland from her own brows, she places it upon the head of the youth; and now he starts up, with a look of rapture upon his face, and again infolds her in his arms.—My dear Sir, I see, well enough, that you are too much excited to speak. I do not wonder in the least—I agree with you, it is quite overpowering.”

It was, indeed, a beautiful sight, but I was too much excited to enjoy it. What was to be done?

I beheld Larry Moore, and, beholding him, I thought of Ella, and of Michael, and their poor mother. I said to myself, "I must reclaim him—I must withdraw him from his vagrant life, and this must be his last performance in the Circus."—And with these thoughts was mixed up a desire of rescuing the little maiden, who rode beside him, from the toils and pains of a life, which I knew was abhorrent to her feelings; I thought that she was descended from gentle parentage, and that the player-people had stolen her for her extreme beauty, and that now she was a desolate child in the centre of a society from which her soul inwardly revolted. "Oh! yes" I thought, "I must reclaim Larry Moore, and rescue this poor little maiden."

But how was I to accomplish this? The youth, during the whole time of his performance never once lifted his eyes from his beautiful little companion. He appeared neither to think of himself nor of his spectators; his whole soul was with his childish associate. Round and round the circus they galloped, increasing their speed at every turn, the boy with one foot upon the maiden's saddle, and one arm encircling her waist. Time after time they passed close before me, but Lawrence raised not his eye from the face of the little girl; and once, as they bounded past me, a rose dropped at my very feet from the garland wreathing her brows. I raised it, and though it were an artificial flower,

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I placed it within my vest, and I felt my heart throbbing against it. The boy, throughout all this time, had been describing the smaller circle; but suddenly they both reined in their horses, and, wheeling sharply round so as to reverse the way of their circumgrations, the youth took the outer ring of the circus, and brushed so closely before me that I might have laid my hand upon his horse's mane as he passed.

"Lawrence—Lawrence Moore!" I whispered, as he galloped past, but, perhaps, I was unheard. The head of the youth was turned from me, and I could not mark the appearance of his countenance; but not a muscle of his frame was moved. In a moment he was on the other side of the circus, and again I drew in my breath, as he neared me: "Lawrence Moore!" I whispered a second time, and my voice was louder and more distinct. "Lawrence Moore!"—and I knew that I was heard.

The youth trembled, and almost tottered. I thought that he would have fallen to the ground. He moved the foot that was on the saddle of his companion's steed, and withdrawing his arm from the little girl's waist, he stood erect with both feet upon his own saddle, his head only drooping a little. I saw that he had difficulty in supporting himself; so fearful of an accident, I resolved to say no more, but to wait patiently till the termination of the performances. But again he neared

me; my eyes were fixed steadfastly upon him; round he came, and bracing up his muscles, in one great effort to be firm, he turned his head towards the place whence the strange voice had proceeded, and his eyes rested upon the troubled countenance of Gerard Doveton—his friend.

This was too much for him. From his elevated position he quickly dropped into his saddle; and his legs hanging listlessly down, and his head drooping, he looked as though all the functions of life had been suddenly suspended within him. The little girl, who rode beside him, became pale as a spectre, and, reining in her docile steed, she unhorsed herself with a graceful spring; and, laying her hand upon the bridle of Lawrence's animal, she checked the progress of the obedient beast; then she took one of the youth's hands between her own, and, looking up into his face, with an expression of tenderest solicitude, she said to him,—“Oh! what ails you?—speak, I beseech you, a word.”

And she, who but a moment before, dreading the gaze of the crowd, dared scarcely uplift her eyes, now unmindful of the assembled multitude, gave full vent to her feelings, and both spoke and acted, as though she beheld in the arena no other being beside Lawrence Moore.

“What ails you?” asked the little girl, looking anxiously into Larry's pale face, her own being still paler than her companion's.

"I am ill, very ill," gasped Lawrence; and when he had said this, he slid from his saddle and staggered out of the circus; little Beaupied followed in his foot-steps.

And then others appeared upon the arena, throwing themselves into ungainly postures — a number of graceless tumblers — but the multitude were equally well pleased, and Lawrence Moore was speedily forgotten by all but the little posture-master and myself.

I arose and quitted my seat; but as the benches were well filled, some minutes elapsed before I had gained the outer platform of the booth; and when I had descended the steps and felt the turf beneath my feet, I discovered, to my great annoyance, that the crowd around the temporary theatre was so dense, that I could not jostle through it with all the rapidity that I wished. But it frequently happens, that out of apparent evil proceedeth much real good; and it is certain that, upon the present occasion, the delay, which I experienced, enabled me to mature my schemes; for as I was elbowing my way through the crowd, desiring with all possible speed to gain the private entrance at the back of the booth, that I might immediately have an interview with Larry Moore, it occurred to me that I might gain admission to the private quarters of the equestrians, by representing myself as a young medical man, and of-

fering my services to the invalid. This I did — but to my infinite mortification I discovered, when I had entered the tiring-room of the players, that “Signor Laurentio” had suddenly disappeared, and all the information concerning him, that I could gain, was that he had thrown a great cloak over his shoulders and rushed out of the booth. One of his associates had attempted to follow him, but the fugitive was soon lost in the crowd.

I then inquired after little Mademoiselle Beaupied, and I was told that she was in the women’s apartment. “Could I see her?” The players stared at me, and replied that the “thing was impossible.” But I was not thus easily to be deterred, and seeing a door close beside me, I resolved to enter, having made up my mind that it communicated with the apartment of the females.

So, without uttering another word, I pushed open this door ; and I found myself in the presence of several hundred spectators — making “my first appearance in the circus.”

“You have mistaken your way out, Sir,” said one of the equestrians in waiting.

“I have,” said I ; and stung by a sense of the ridiculous position in which I stood, I hastily quitted the booth, for it was very evident that as I did not know my way to the women’s apartment, I could not well force an entrance into it.

So I took my station, like a sentinel at the

back-entrance of the booth ; but hour after hour passed away, and still Larry Moore returned not. Evening closed in and night succeeded, but the fugitive did not re-appear. At length, weary of my vigils, and fearful lest my good uncle and my cousin Emily should be made anxious by my protracted absence, I resolved to return home.

But on the morrow I again visited the fair, and I was informed by one of the equestrians that "Signor Laurentio" had returned to the booth in the dead of night, and whilst the whole company were asleep he had possessed himself of all his private property, and again absconded, taking with him little Mademoiselle Beaupied.

CHAPTER XV.

THE STUDIO.

" Books are there
Pictures and casts from all those statues fair,
Which are twin-born with poetry."

SHELLEY.

AND now the period had arrived of my promised visit to Charlton Abbey; and it was, indeed, with no ordinary emotions that I set out for the residence of Mr. Anstruther. I was about, in a few hours, to become the guest of this mysterious but generous-hearted man; and anticipating my second interview with the strange being, whom I had first met under such extraordinary circumstances, I looked forward to the event with min-

gled eagerness, and trepidation. I scarcely knew whether I desired, or whether I dreaded the approaching interview.

I am often a prey to nervous excitement; but never upon great occasions. The anticipation of a most trivial event, such as a visit to a stranger, or perhaps, to a friend, a journey, a party, or the receipt of a letter, has often thrown me into a state of uneasiness, almost amounting to distress; but in the presence of any real danger, however embarrassing the situation may be, I am wont to be remarkably collected, and have more than once, in a most critical position, exhibited great presence of mind. My nerves seem to gain strength in proportion to the magnitude of the occasion. I suppose that this is what certain writers call "the triumph of mind over matter." — Moral power casting aside the disadvantages of physical debility. I state the fact with no desire to derive therefrom any inference favourable to myself; but in some measure to account for certain apparent inconsistencies in the attempted developement of my character. I never suffered so much from nervous excitement, as I did during my journey to Charlton Abbey; throughout the whole time, I was in a most painful state of tremulous uneasiness, and whenever I attempted to speak, my voice faltered so much, that my words were almost inarticulate, and I scarcely had the power to answer

the simplest question that was put to me by a fellow-passenger.

But at length the mail set me down at M——, where I found one of Mr. Anstruther's carriages waiting to convey me to the Abbey. My nervousness increased as I approached the end of my journey, and as I entered the park-gates, and beheld the stately mansion of my mysterious friend through a vista of fine old trees, my fear and trembling had arrived at such an alarming pitch, that I had good reason to anticipate the catastrophe of a nervous fever. Anstruther was certainly a mysterious being, and my imagination was, beyond all doubt, a very powerful magnifying medium.

But, when I beheld Mr. Anstruther, standing upon the steps, which conducted to the principal entrance of his mansion, and marked the smile of welcome upon his face, all fear forsook me suddenly; love and gratitude took possession of my whole soul, and I had no other desire but to rush into the arms of my patron, and to pour out the full measure of my thankfulness.

And there he stood, bare-headed upon the doorstep, a beautiful smile over-spreading the habitual melancholy of his face, like a ray of sunshine, entering a sepulchre. There he stood, looking towards the carriage, as it approached, and when the vehicle drew up, he came forward, exclaiming

“Welcome, most welcome, to the Abbey;” and with his own hand throwing open the door, and letting down the steps of the chariot, in a moment he had clasped me in his arms.

Then, still grasping my hand, he conducted me to his study; and when we were alone, he again fervently embraced me. “My kind, generous-hearted boy,” he exclaimed, “how overjoyed I am to see you.”

“And I—,” was all that I could utter.

“Oh! yes,” continued Anstruther, “for fifteen years I have not been so happy as at this moment. I love you, I do indeed, almost as though you were my son. Albeit, for scarcely half an hour, in your life, you have been in my presence, Gerard, I know you full as well as if you had lived with me all your days, for I have often communed with your mind, and methinks I have not been studying your character altogether in vain. With one noble example of your actions to guide me, and many written illustrations of the high tone of your thoughts, and feelings, I think that I have been able, my dear boy, to form a correct estimate of your character, and certain am I, that I shall never find myself mistaken. Your letters, and above all your book, are the very mirrors of your mind. I know it, for that one generous action which has been the happy cause of our alliance, Gerard, is a strong confirmation that your deeds

do not belie the nobility of your thoughts. Oh ! I want words to tell you how glad I am to have you with me. And you will dwell here, you will not leave me too soon. You will be to me, I am sure you will—a son.”

I could only utter, echo-like, “a son ;” for my heart was exceeding full. Even little acts of kindness, overcome me ; but such great kindness as this !— Oh ! I have not words to tell what I felt.

“A son—yes ; you know that I am childless ;” and large tears rolled down his cheeks, as he spoke. “I have none to bless me. I am the last of my race. I am a poor, bereaved, desolate being. No, no, not desolate now, for thou wilt be to me a son, and I will love you as a father.”

“Yes, a son—a servant—every thing.”

“And you will dwell with me ?”

“Oh ! yes ; too happy to move about in your presence.”

“Bless you !—oh, you are very kind !—but you look pale and exhausted. The journey has been too much for you, or perhaps you are unwell. You shall drink some wine ;” and he rang the bell. “You will be better when you have slept ; and yet I think that you are stouter than you were. This place is considered very healthy, and we will ride out every day. I believe that one’s horse is one’s best physician ; and we will visit all the

country round about. There are some sweet spots in the neighbourhood. To-morrow, if the weather be fine, we will go the circuit of the Park; on Thursday, we will ride to M——;” and thus he went on, making plans for the whole week; and when he had done, he pressed me affectionately by the hand, and bending his eyes on me, whilst a sweet smile played upon his face, he added, in a joyous tone of voice, — “ And we will be so happy !”

“ Yes, so happy; and we will love one another.”

“ We will; and live a pleasant life.—Ah! here is wine; it will refresh you to drink; and I, too, must drink your health, and ‘welcome to Charlton Abbey.’”

The wine did me much good; for my throat was painfully dry, and I was exhausted almost to faintness. When I had drunk, I immediately felt that I had gained a vast access of strength; I was calmer too, and better able to converse: the first excitement of our meeting was over. Anstruther perceived the change, and he said, “ Ah! now you are better,—you have a little colour upon your cheeks,—but, before, you were very pale. I think that, when you have washed and dressed yourself, you will feel quite well: cold water is a great restorer. Should you like to be shown to your apartments ?”

I signified my assent, and Anstruther rang the

bell. "Send Guido hither," said he to the servant who answered the summons.

And presently Guido appeared,—a pretty boy about thirteen years of age, with a dark-eyed Italian countenance, and a fantastically picturesque dress. "This boy," said Mr. Anstruther, addressing himself to me, "little Guido, is your page. He will show the way to your apartments;—but, stay—I will come with you, and be my own lord chamberlain for once."

As he said this, Mr. Anstruther led the way, and having conducted me across a magnificent hall, we presently ascended a broad staircase of highly polished oak. Then passing along a lofty gallery, on either side of which hung a number of dusky portraits, we had soon reached the suite of rooms appropriated to me; and I found myself in the most beautiful chamber I had ever beheld in my life.

It was to be my study. "I have endeavoured," said Mr. Anstruther, "to prepare a room worthy to receive you. I am anxious that all surrounding objects should be in harmony with your own mind,—beautiful and graceful,—Gerard. If there be anything here offensive to you, give instant orders that it be removed; you are at liberty to alter and amend. I have arranged things here after what I have conceived to be the most becoming fashion, but I may have failed. My taste is not always to

be relied upon; and you, I know, my dear boy, have an exquisite perception of the beautiful. Therefore, I say, if there be anything here offensive to your taste, amend it;" and as he uttered these words, there was a playfulness in his manner, and an arch smile upon his face, the full meaning of which I knew very well how to interpret.

"Oh, beautiful! beautiful!" I exclaimed, surveying the apartment with intense admiration; "it is what I have been dreaming of for years."

"And how is it possible that I should have divined your dreams?" said Anstruther, the same arch smile still playing upon his handsome face.

"Oh, indeed! I have often pictured to myself an apartment resembling this,—an apartment full of beautiful things; and now, behold! I have entered in reality the very chamber I have so often visited in imagination."

"Then I have not failed."

"Failed!—oh! my kindest of friends! my more than father, how exquisite is all this!"

"I have endeavoured," returned Anstruther, "to arrange all these things according to your own directions."

"To my directions?"

"Yes, Gerard; for you yourself have described to me your *beau-ideal* of an apartment; and as you have described, so have I endeavoured to ren-

der it. You see—in this room, at all events,—one proof of my having *studied your book*.”

“Oh! kind, good man!—and there, indeed, is everything here that my imagination has pictured. How very little did I expect ever to behold my dreams thus magnificently realized!”

“Do not praise me for what I have done,” returned Anstruther; “it is all selfishness on my part. I am trying to bribe you to remain with me. But now I will leave you to yourself,” continued my kind friend, as he moved towards the door of my chamber. “When you come below again, I must take you into the library, that you may select books therefrom for these vacant cases; as, when you described your sanctum, you did not give a detailed list of the books which you desired to adorn it.” And having said this, Mr. Anstruther quitted the chamber, and I was left alone with little Guido, the page.

“Come hither, my pretty boy,” said I, as I flung myself upon a couch of velvet with cushions of worked satin.

Guido stood before me, and his fine lustrous eyes seemed to say, “What service shall I render you?”

“Sit down, Guido, on that ottoman. You are an Italian;—do you understand English?”

“I am a Venetian,” replied the boy, in the lan-

guage of our own country; "but I have dwelt, since my childhood, in England."

"With Mr. Anstruther?"

"Yes. My father was his valet; but now, sir, I am a poor orphan. I have neither parents, nor brother, nor sister, nor any relative, in the world."

"Be a good boy, Guido, and I will be to you a father, a brother, and a friend. Do you think, Guido, that you will ever be able to make up your mind to like me?"

"Oh! yes, Sir, I have made up my mind already, for you speak in a very kind voice."

"Do you like your master?"

"*You*, Sir, are my master."

"But Mr. Anstruther —"

"Oh! yes, he is very kind; but sometimes I am almost frightened to be in the room with him alone. I have seen him look so strangely, and I have heard him sobbing like a child, as though his poor heart were bursting; and I don't know what is the matter with him, for he has been in this way for years. Far back as ever I can remember, I have never seen him smile before to-day; your coming, Sir, has altered the look of his face, the tones of his voice, and all about him. Oh! indeed, it is sometimes quite terrible to watch ——" but here I checked the prattle of the boy, for I thought that it did not become me to converse

with him upon such a theme as the character of his master.

So I changed the subject, for there was something that pleased me very much in this Italian boy; and I said to him, laughing as I spoke, "Has any body ever told you, Guido, that you are a very beautiful child?"

Guido blushed, and hanging down his head, replied, "Mr. Anstruther told me."

"And what did he say? now, don't be modest, but tell me what Mr. Anstruther said."

And the page, lifting up his dark eyes, replied, "When this room, Sir, was prepared for your reception, and all the pictures hung up, and the statues put upon their pedestals, Mr. Anstruther took me into it, and said, 'Don't you think, Guido, that this is a very beautiful room?'—And I said, 'The most beautiful room, Sir, I have ever beheld in my life;'"—here the boy's voice faltered, a deep blush crimsoned his cheeks, and his head drooped again, overladen with the weight of his modesty.

"Go on, Guido," said I, enjoying the distress of the boy.

"And Mr. Anstruther said to me, 'It is a beautiful room, and *therefore*, Guido, *you* shall have the charge of it.'"

"Oh! Guido," said I, laughing, "you have a quick ear to drink in a compliment."

“ I did not understand it at first,” replied the boy, “ but when I thought over Mr. Anstruther’s words, I could not mistake the meaning of the *therefore*.”

“ You were right, Guido,” said I, starting up from my recumbent posture, — “ but you must show me all the beauties of the room. Which is the chiefest ?”

“ *The view from the window.*”

“ You are right, Guido, you are right ; nature always before art. Beautiful and magnificent is the prospect ; do you see that fine air-tint upon the distant hills ? What think you the colour is like ?”

“ The bloom upon a plum,” returned Guido.

“ Oh ! yes, the bloom upon a plum, before a human finger has touched it. I think, Guido, that it is even more beautiful than the *couleur de rose* of those window-curtains.”

“ I think so too, Sir,” said Guido, thoughtfully.

“ And what next, my pretty boy ? what is the next beautiful thing to the prospect visible from the window ?”

Guido hesitated, and looked around the room ; “ Yourself, Guido ?” said I.

“ Oh ! no, Sir, that little girl in marble, done by my countryman, the great sculptor.”

“ Canova ?”

“ Yes, Mr. Anstruther told me, that I ought to be proud of Canova, the Venetian.”

“ And so you ought, Guido ; how exquisitely graceful is the figure of this little girl ; this Psyche ; I know that it is Psyche, the bride of the boy Cupid. Well, Guido, what next ? ”

“ This picture of the woman with her doves ; I think that this also is the work of a Venetian.”

“ Nay, now you are partial to your fellow-countrymen.”

“ Look at the picture, Sir, and *then* judge. But is it not right to be proud of one’s countrymen ? ”

“ Yes, Guido, and you are right too. This painting is a Venus, by Titian ; and I think, next to the Psyche, the most beautiful creation in the room. Now, Guido, do you not think that you could spend your whole life in gazing upon such loveliness as this ? ”

“ I have heard,” said Guido, “ that my own country is the place to see beautiful sights.”

“ And yet I doubt, whether, in all Italy, there is such a dear little *sanctum* as this.”

Then I continued to survey the beauties of the apartment ; and, indeed, they were many and great. The general effect of the arrangements was taken, as Mr. Anstruther acknowledged, from a description in the second volume of my book, but the exquisite taste of my host was discernible in all the lesser details. All things were in beautiful harmony with one another, making one most consummate whole. Neither in form, nor colour, nor

disposition, was there aught in the chamber that could be offensive to the most exquisite refinement of sense. The pictures upon the walls were few, but they were gems by the first masters; and only two specimens of sculpture adorned the room; a Psyche, by Canova, and a Greek Shepherd Boy, by our own most classical Flaxman. I have often thought that to attempt a piece-meal description of an effect, the beauty of which consists in its unity, is an useless expenditure of labour; and therefore, I shall not endeavour to delineate in detail, the charms of my little Paradise in the Abbey.

But herein consisteth a striking advantage, which the painter's art possesseth over the poets.

"And this, Sir, is your writing-table," said little Guido; "as you sit there, Psyche appears to be just turning round to smile upon you."

"Do you know what Psyche is?" said I.

"A little girl, and I heard you say, 'the bride of the boy Cupid.'"

"True; but Psyche means *the soul*,—and I will tell you her history; 'tis a pretty fable, and not without meaning, my Guido. Psyche was a mortal maiden till Cupid grew enamoured of her, and then she became a divinity. Now, Psyche is the personification of the soul, and Cupid, as you know, Guido, is love; when love enters the soul it becomes etherialized,—it is no longer a thing "of earth,

earthy," but it is lifted up to heaven, and becomes divine. You have not forgotten your Italian, have you, Guido?

L'amore è per Dio lume supermo,
Scintilla dell' immortal fuoco.

Ha! ha! my Lord Byron, you did not go to Italy for nothing:—

" Yes, love indeed is light from heaven,
A spark of that immortal fire,
By angels shared,"—

και τα λοιπα—but now, Guido, I must tell you, that Venus hated Psyche and destroyed her;*—now Venus,—but I have told you quite enough about these Gods and Goddesses, Guido,—by Apollo! how inviting is this chair; methinks I could sit here, and write from 'morn to dewy eve;—and oh! what a beautiful ink-stand in the shape of a silver well,—ah! *the well of English undefiled*;—in this will I ever dip my pen,—and what hosts of materials for writing;—was ever a table more complete? Portfolios, note-books, most fantas-

* Venus signifies Lust, and Lust destroys the soul. There is always a very fine latent meaning in these mythological fables. Thus Cupid is the child of Venus; but by whom? Either by Jupiter, who is Dominion, or by Mars, who is Victory,—signifying that Love is sexual desire, rendered subservient to the dominion of mind.

tical pen-wipers,—and oh ! what a love of a paper-knife ! I declare that there is a quire of paper on the desk, with a pen lying temptingly by the side of it ! I will begin a book, and I will call it “Guido ;” there cannot be a prettier name. Vol. I. chapter the 1st ; but, Guido, what is that bell ?”

“The first dinner-bell.”

“Oh ! then I must dress ; but tell me, Guido, how comes it that there is no fire-place in the room, and yet it is not cold ?”

“A fire-place would have spoilt the room, Sir,—and, therefore, it is heated with warm air from without.”

“And yet I do not see the flues.”

“But you can see, Sir, those two bronze shields.”

“Right, Guido,—and now we will go and dress. We pass through this ante-room to my bed-chamber.”

“Yes, Sir, this is my waiting-room, and I sleep upon this couch ; I have only to touch a few springs, and I am supplied with all the furniture of a bed-room. Behind that picture is a closet containing my ward-robe,—and this, Sir, is your chamber.”

“And a dormitory fit for a prince.”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PROGRESS OF PREJUDICE.

“ Ha ! ha !—forgive me, Sir,—
I thought you were all candour, and that none
Could tax you with injustice,—I esteemed you
A very Aristides, but I find
That Prejudice and Bigotry have made
Their homes in your weak mind ;—I crave your pardon,
But I misjudged you, and I’m sorry for it ”

Old Play.

WHEN I had dressed myself, little Guido conducted me into one of the drawing-rooms, for without his assistance I should infallibly have lost my way. There I found Mr. Anstruther lying upon a sofa, and perusing a book by the fire-light. Upon my entrance, he rose from his recumbent posture, and approaching me, said in a gay voice, “ Will the *sanctum* do for you, Gerard ? ”

"Oh ! Mr. Anstruther," I answered enthusiastically; "I have been so delighted—so enraptured with it, that my tongue has been scarcely silent one moment since I entered that little Paradise of rooms. I do not know what I have said, but perhaps little Guido could tell you,—I have been talking all manner of 'fine madness,' and I do not think that I shall be able, for at least a week, to subside into every-dayishness."

"I see no reason," returned Mr. Anstruther, "why you should ever subside into it at all; nor, indeed, do I think that you will. But, now tell me, Gerard, what are your favourite books; for after dinner we will search for them in the library."

And I answered, without hesitation, "The Plays of Æschylus, the Dialogues of Plato, the Allegories of Apuleius, and the *De Rerum Naturâ* of Lucretius."

"These for your classics."

"Then the works of Lord Bacon, Sir Philip Sydney's *Arcadia*, all the writings of Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, and Robert South."

"It will not be difficult to find them,—but proceed."

"Some of the olden dramatists,—especially Beaumont and Fletcher,—the poems of Spenser, and of Herrick,—and—and—and the *writings of Erasmus.*"

I had no indirect meaning in uttering these last words,—no latent desire to awaken by my allusions any dormant remembrances in Anstruther's mind. At that moment I was thinking of nothing but the extreme kindness of my friend ; I had forgotten the mystery of his character in the exceeding benevolence of his actions ; gratitude had absorbed every feeling of curiosity, and I had but one wish to prove myself worthy of the excessive kindness of my benefactor. Yet so it was that I had no sooner uttered these words, insignificant as they were in themselves, than I thought of Ella and Michael Moore, and of the little book their mother had given me. Then an impulse, which I could not resist, urged me to proceed further,—an impulse, springing from an impure source, for it neither arose out of reason, nor out of kindness, drove me onward in a headlong course ; and, fixing my eyes searchingly upon Anstruther as I spoke, I said, “What do you think of the *Erasmi Colloquia* ?”

This was merely an experiment ; and I could scarcely have expected that it would have been productive of any particular result. But I tried it ; and it did not fail. A cloud gathered upon Anstruther's brow, and suddenly his large, deep eyes were suffused with glistening tears. The red light from the fire gleamed upon his face, and I could see, by the compression of his lips, that he

was endeavouring, with all the strength of his mind, to quell the rising emotions which had been awakened by my allusion to the Erasmus. And he succeeded: passing one of his hands hurriedly across his eyes, he brushed away the tears that were gathering there; and then he answered, in a voice which faltered slightly, yet so slightly, that, had I not been on the watch, I should have scarcely observed the trepidation,—“ Oh! I think, Gerard, that there is much quaint morality to be found in some of the dialogues,—a great deal of what may be called the philosophy of common sense.—But go on with your list, my dear boy; you have not mentioned any of the moderns.”

“ Let me think,” said I. “ Wordsworth, Shelley, and some of Hazlitt’s Critical Essays. Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria*, and Mr. Carlyle’s translation of *Wilhelm Meister*. Charles Lamb’s *Essays of Elia*, and John Wilson’s *Isle of Palms*.”

“ I observe,” said Anstruther, “ that you have passed over in silence all the writers of Queen Anne’s time.”

“ I cannot bear them.”

“ What! not the *Spectator*—with Will Honeycombe, and Sir Roger de Coverly?”

“ No. I cannot tolerate the *wits*,—the very name of ‘a wit’ disgusts me. I do not like to read about Ramillies wigs and Mohocks: I might as well read Pepys’ Diary. There is an absence

of masculine energy in all the writings of that age; they are all tinged with foppery, and I hate a fop worse than anything in nature. The greatest authors of that day were coffee-house literateurs; they were all bucks and petits maitres; dandified, perfumed writers of the black-patch-and-silver-buckle school. There is no high-toned feeling in their works, no grand principles, no lofty aspirations;—all is low, petty, detailed, redolent of coffee-houses and sedan-chairs. There is no country freshness in them; they all bear the stamp of a city. I do not insist that I am right; but this is my genuine opinion; and I never wish to increase my acquaintance with the *wits* of the Queen Anne's reign—*never*."

"I like your right-earnestness," replied Anstruther; "short-comings and misgivings disgust me. I seldom am fortunate enough to hear a thorough-going, out-spoken opinion expressed on any subject whatever: but I should like much to hear what you think of the book I was studying when you entered."

"And what is it?"

"*Tom Jones*."

"The history of histories," I exclaimed. "It has never been equalled, and never will be;—*Gil Blas* is nothing beside it. I read *Tom Jones*, for the first time, when I was recovering from a severe illness: it did me more good than all the strength-

ening medicines: it was the finest tonic in the world. Who could ever think of being ill in the company of Thwackum and Square?—who in bad spirits, sitting beside Partridge, and listening to his criticisms on the play?—who——.”

“Nay, now, Gerard!” interrupted Mr. Anstruther, smiling upon me as he spoke; “I have detected you in the commission of a palpable injustice. You withhold that praise from the original which you are willing to lavish upon its copy.”

“What original? what copy?” I asked.

“The original is No. 335, of the *Spectator*,—‘Sir Roger de Coverly at the Play;’—the copy is”—and he turned over the pages of the book, which he still held in his hand,—“the copy is the fifth chapter of the sixteenth book of *Tom Jones*, in which ‘Jones goes to a play with Mrs. Millar and Partridge.’ This is hardly fair, Gerard,—to extol the copy, and yet to censure the original. You may love Fielding better than Addison, but

‘Honour to whom honour is due ;

and let justice direct all your criticisms, whether they be upon books or on men.”

“But do you not yourself love Fielding better than Addison?” said I.

“I confess, Gerard, that I do,” returned Anstruther. “For many years past, I have been a prey to the most miserable depression of spirits; and I have been obliged to resort to an artificial stimu-

lant—to preserve me, I might almost say, from madness. I have tried many stimulants ; but the best that I have found, has been the study of certain choice comic works, which will stand the test of frequent re-perusal. At the head of my mental physicians, stand Fielding, and Smollet, and Scarron. Rabelais is too coarse for me : I cannot return to the History of Gargantua and Pantagruel with any anticipation of enjoyment. Ben Jonson I read with an uncommon degree of gusto ; and even Wycherly and Congreve I can tolerate : though the former is too courtly, and the latter too libertine, to afford me any very great delight. I will say nothing of Steele and Addison, because they are your favourite aversions. Cervantes and Le Sage,”—but here he was interrupted by the entrance of a servant, announcing dinner ; and breaking off suddenly, he added, “ But, after this ‘ feast of reason,’ let us proceed to one more substantial.” Then he passed his arm through mine, and together we entered the dining-room.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PHYSICIAN AND HIS PATIENT.

“ ’Twas perhaps an idle thought,
But I imagined that if day by day
I watched him, and but seldom went away,
And studied all the beatings of his heart
With zeal, as men study some stubborn art
For their own good, and could by patience find
An entrance to the caverns of his mind,
I might reclaim him from his dark estate.”

SHELLEY.

To study a man's character, is not always to comprehend it; and Anstruther's was profoundly unintelligible. I loved him, because he was kind to me. I pitied him, because he was afflicted. I admired, because I beheld in him manifestations of a very superior intellect; but I did not *know* him; the intricacies of his nature were problems that I could not solve, because I had not for my *data* the events of his past life.

Yet I was not altogether in ignorance. I knew more than he suspected me of knowing; but still, not enough to enable me to read the secrets of his heart, and to account for the profundity of his sorrow. What! not enough? in one dreadful night to have lost all that was dearest to him—a young wife, and three innocent children, buried in one common tombless grave—the cemetery of the relentless ocean. Not enough, to account for his habitual despondency?—No, reader, not enough. There is no enduring sorrow, but that which is the offspring of remorse.

And nearly fifteen years had elapsed since the date of Anstruther's misfortunes. Time is a great physician; all-powerful is it to re-establish a broken spirit in its natural strength. But, what was time to Anstruther? Months and years passed away; but his anguish abated "not a jot."

Had he done evil? I scarcely suffered my mind to harbour such an uncharitable conjecture; and yet, if I had any knowledge of the human heart, his anguish was the anguish of remorse. But he was so mild, so kind-hearted; all his uttered thoughts bespoke so plainly a yearning after the good of his fellow-creatures; his dependents so loved him for his unceasing benevolence; and the conduct of his life accorded so strictly with the pure morality of the Redeemer, that indeed it

would have been difficult to have suspected him of being other than the "best good man." None knew him, who did not love him. None knew him, who did not sorrow with him. His very servants sympathized with their master, and respected his grief, without profanely attempting to penetrate the mystery that shrouded it. As for myself, I loved him so entirely, that not even the discovery of a damning crime, clinging like a leprosy to his wretched soul, could have shaken the pillar of my affection.

Pity, gratitude, and admiration, made up the structure of my love. I pitied, oh ! very deeply, the sorrows that I could not comprehend : but, whilst I pitied, I tried to alleviate them, and in part my efforts were successful. It was plain that Anstruther loved me, and love itself is happiness, when we are conscious that it is not unreturned. He delighted in my companionship, and I suffered him rarely to be alone ; for solitude is the aliment of melancholy. I endeavoured to divert his mind from all introspective meditations, conversing with him unceasingly upon matters of general interest, and scrupulously abstaining from any personal allusions. Literature, science, the fine arts, and sometimes politics, were the common subjects of our discourse ; and, indeed, I was more than repaid for my labours, in Anstruther's cause, by the beauty and profundity of his cri-

ticisms. It was a pleasant thing, indeed, to hear him ; for his voice was the sweetest I had ever listened to in my life, and his observations so luminous, and so original, that I had not conversed with him long, before I discovered that I knew actually nothing. In his presence I always stood self-acknowledged as an inferior being. I never attempted to compete with him ; but marvelled at the extent of his knowledge ; and whatever I ventured to advance, I advanced with the utmost diffidence. I had never thought so meanly, before, of my own powers. Once I imagined myself to be a giant ; but now, I knew that I was a dwarf. Before, I had been like Gulliver in Lilliput ; now, like the same worthy amongst the Brobdignags, a very little creature indeed.

Then, I would entice him abroad into the fields, and sometimes, I would persuade him to take a gun with him, for there was much game in the Charlton estate. At other times we would ride many miles from home, and, perhaps, sleep abroad for a night. Then, I would propose long walks, and divers little pleasant excursions ; and as we went along, I would talk all manner of wild nonsense—entering into the history of my school-boy days, and telling strange stories of my contemporaries. I would laugh and sing ; and be gay, and frolicsome ; hoping to impart a little of my mirth

to the sorrow-stricken soul of my companion. Then, a smile would light up his wan face; a smile, more of affection than of joy; and sometimes, but very seldom, he laughed out-right at my foolery; but it was not a gleesome, nor a natural laugh; it was an effort, rather than an impulse; he laughed, because he knew that I was kind, not because he felt that I was ludicrous.

If the weather were unpropitious, and we were compelled to abide at home, I would drag Anstruther to the billiard table. He was a wretched player; and, if possible, I was worse; but I never regretted our unskilfulness, for it was to me, an abundant pretext for merry-making. I laughed at my own failures, and bantered Anstruther, whenever he missed a stroke that he ought to have made. We knocked about the balls; and Guido scored for us. The little fellow laughed at our clumsiness, and then I hit him across the back with my cue, always taking care not to hurt him in the least. And I would offer to bet all sorts of out-of-the-way things. "Rees' Encyclopædia to a six-penny pamphlet." "Shakspeare's first folio to Mr. P—'s last farce." "A Reubens to a sign-post." "A Canova to a doll;" or any thing equally absurd. The balls rattled; and I talked nonsense; and little Guido looked on with a countenance full of wonder and delight; and

Anstruther—played at billiards, with a smile upon his face; but I cannot tell what was stirring at his heart.

Yet I persevered; for I knew well enough that to eradicate the melancholy of years, was not a thing to be accomplished in a day. I persevered; for I saw that I was succeeding, although I had not consummated my success. There were seasons, when no effort upon my part, no out-burst of ludicrous hilarity, no facetious anecdote, or humorous story, could light up his features with a smile. On these occasions, when I spoke to him, he did not hear me, or hearing me, he would only answer with a monosyllable to my questions, "Yes," or "No," and to my stories, always "Good." Then I would think it best to leave him to his solitude, hoping, that when alone, an out-burst of feeling, an uncontrolled flood of tears might relieve him. Oh! indeed, I would have laid down my life to have brought joy to poor Anstruther's heart; and I did bend all the powers of my mind to the accomplishment of this one cherished object.

I rose early, and I seldom retired to my bed till past midnight; for Anstruther was an uncertain sleeper, and I was most unwilling to leave him to the agony of his nocturnal meditations. Sometimes, when after a day of hard exercise, I beheld with delight the weariness of my friend, I would persuade him at an earlier hour than usual to seek

the repose that his tired frame required ; and dismissing his valet, I would tend him with my own hands ; and when his head was laid upon the pillow, I would take a volume of poetry, and read to him in a drawling, somniferous voice,—than which there is no harder trial to a young person vain of his genius,—until I had *sung* him fairly to sleep ; and then I would retire, with noiseless steps, rejoicing in the success of my machinations.

But one night, I well remember that I had withdrawn to my own apartment, and I was writing in my beautiful studio, when Anstruther entered the room with the rich folds of his *robe de chambre*, enveloping his almost naked frame. He could not sleep, and he said that he came to enjoy a little more of my conversation. I desired Guido to withdraw, and then I asked Mr. Anstruther, whether I should read to him. He thanked me, and replied in the affirmative. “ And suppose,” said he, putting into my hand a book, which had been lying upon the table, “ that you read a few scenes from Shakspeare, for of *his* works we never can be tired.”

The play that I selected was *Macbeth*, and I commenced at the fourth act. I read on without interruption, until I reached the scene, where news is brought to Macduff, of the massacre of his wife and children. Then I felt that I had read too far ; I knew that I was touching upon the most sensi-

tive chord which thrilled through Anstruther's heart; but I durst not pause; I thought it wisest to proceed; and keeping my eyes fixed upon the pages of the books, though they traced not the characters that were written there, I articulated in a faltering voice, the well-known lamentation of Macduff:—

“ He has no children—All my pretty ones !
Did you say all ? what all ? oh ! hell-kite ! all !
What all my pretty chickens and their dam,
At one fell swoop ? ”

I read no more; for I had scarcely uttered these words, ere a groan of intensest agony escaped from Anstruther's breast. “ Hold ! hold ! in God's name, Gerard, no more of that ; I cannot bear it,” he exclaimed, and looking up, I beheld the convulsive distortions of his wan face, whilst he writhed like a crushed worm, and I almost feared that I had killed him.

I could not speak ; it must have been a fearful sight to have seen us two at that moment. There was Anstruther writhing upon a couch ; his corpse-like, distorted face, upturned, and his hands clenched ; I, pale and motionless as a marble statue, sitting erectly in a chair, with my starting eyes fixed steadfastly upon the countenance of my friend, and the book still open in my hand. I am sure that the agony of that moment must have

been equally shared by me ; for I thought that my benefactor was dying, and that my folly and imprudence had slain him.

“ All my pretty ones !” sobbed Anstruther, his breast heaving convulsively as he spoke,—“ all at one fell swoop, the dam and her chickens, Gerard ! not one left to bless the old man ; he has no children, none to bless him ;”—then burying his face in his hands, a flood of tears came to his relief ; and he shivered all over, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, and then he was calmer.

“ Oh ! Gerard,” continued the afflicted man, in a broken sentence, “ I should not have asked you to read that, it was my fault entirely, my own ;” then checking himself, he continued,—“ but I am weak and foolish ; can you tell me the hour of the night ?”

I replied that it was past mid-night ; and then, Anstruther, starting suddenly from his recumbent posture, asked in hurried accents, and with an affectation of levity, “ Do you think that there are lights in the billiard-room ?”

“ I think not, but I will send Guido to light up the room.”

“ Oh ! no,” returned Anstruther in a compassionate tone of voice ; “ do not disturb the poor little fellow, for doubtless he has fallen asleep.”

Then with increased vivacity,—“ I’ll tell you

what, Gerard, I have been thinking that if we two were to set to work gravely, we might produce a right good novel in concert,—a humorous one, full of “merrie conceits,”—something like “Pene-grine Pickle.” I’ll tell you what I propose for the plot of it ; or, give me a pen, I will sketch out the frame-work, and then we will fill it up together.”

“ Oh ! delightful,” I exclaimed, as I placed before Anstruther, my quaintly-devised ink-stand ; but I could not help thinking of Cowper and John Gilpin ; and I silently quoted to myself these lines from Chapman’s *Hero and Leander* :—

“ Ay me, but hard it is
To exercise a false and forced bliss ;
Ill may a sad mind forge a merry face,
Nor hath constrained laughter any grace.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHILDLESS MAN, AND THE LITTLE CHILD.

“ Sir, will you walk with me ?
Your conversation throbs about my heart
Like new-born hope ; I seem at last to have found
A book, which I would read most seriously.
Come, you shall be my tutor and my friend.”
HORNÆ'S *Cosmo de Medici*.

Not long after the occurrence of the little incident detailed in the last chapter, one fine clear morning in the first week of December, Anstruther and I were walking together in the park, conversing cheerfully upon various topics of general interest, and much enjoying the dry coldness of the weather, which imparted a briskness to our motions, and even caused a slight hue of health to blush on the pale cheek of my companion. An-

struther was in unwontedly good spirits; I had scarcely ever known him to be so vivacious, and for once I did not think that he dissembled.

And as we passed along one of the noble avenues of trees, for which the Charlton estates were so remarkable, I heard a voice, not far from us, calling aloud repeatedly the word, "Rover."

It was a child's voice, clear and musical; and "Rover, Rover!" was the cry. "Whose voice is that?" asked Anstruther, and his own faltered as he spoke. I looked at him, and I thought that he trembled.

"It is a child's voice," I replied, "and it seems to be calling to a dog."

"I had scarcely answered when from behind one of the trees a little spaniel emerged into sight, and presently a rosy-cheeked cottage child, about five or six years of age, came running after the dog close before us still crying out, "Rover, Rover!"

I smiled to see the earnestness with which the little boy pursued his four-footed favourite; bare-headed, and his cheeks ruddy with exercise, on he went quite out of breath, scarcely taking notice of us as he passed. The dog frisked and gamboled, first running forward, and then backward, as though he delighted in thus tantalizing the urchin. It was a pleasant sight, but Anstruther thought otherwise. He liked it not. "Gerard," said he in

a voice harsh with emotion ; “ whose child is that? Tell me.”

“ I do not know—’tis a pretty child, and how earnestly—”

But Anstruther interrupted me. “ Speak to him, Gerard, if you please, and inquire the name of his father.”

Wondering, I hastened to obey.—“ Come here, my little fellow,” I cried ; and the progress of the child was arrested.

He stared at me, and looked frightened, as though he had done some wrong, but I encouraged him with kind words, and then I asked him his name.

“ Johnny Haughton,” replied the urchin ; “ and Rover is the name of my dog,—a naughty dog he is, for he runs away from me ;” and the child looked as though he were desirous to continue his pursuit of the quadruped.

“ And who is your father, my little man ?”

“ Father,—why, he be my father,” —and then, after a few moments reflection,—“ he be garden-man to the squire.”

“ Now, run along as quick as you can,” said I, and having returned to Mr. Anstruther, I acquainted him what I had learned, still in ignorance of the cause of his anxiety.

“ John Haughton,” said Anstruther in a stern, slow voice ; “ and one of my under-gardeners. Now remember, Gerard, that I give orders to

Price (Price was the steward), for this man's dismissal."

"His dismissal," I exclaimed in a deprecating tone.

"Yes, Gerard, his dismissal."

"I shall not forget, Sir," said I, in a voice of sorrowful submission.

My accents found their way to the heart of my companion ; he was touched by the sadness of my manner, and he returned in a milder voice, "You think I am harsh, my dear Gerard,—and perhaps I am ; but upon this subject I have issued my orders so repeatedly that I cannot bear again to be disobeyed. You do not comprehend me, I see,—for that, which to you is pleasant, to me is wormwood,—*the sight of young children*. Oh ! Gerard, you know not how it maddens me to look on a little child,—it is one of the fairest sights in nature, but to my morbid vision it is "more hideous than the sea-monster,"—and that which gladdens the hearts of others, strikes anguish into my soul. You comprehend me ; I see that you do,—then no longer think that I am harsh. What avails it that you are with me, and that we laugh, and jest, and play at billiards, and read Scarron, whilst little children are suffered to run about before me, and mock me till I am almost mad."

There was a pause, which I was the first to interrupt ;—"But, John Haughton ?" said I, look-

ing up with an appealing expression of countenance into poor Anstruther's face—

“Is forgiven for your sake, Gerard,”—and he took me affectionately by the hand,—“but speak to him, and use your endeavours to spare me this misery again.”

“Oh! that I will; it shall never be so again; but now let us turn homewards, and have some fun in the billiard-room. If you give me ten in the hundred, I'll bet you my best Rembrandt to an Annual print, that I beat you in five-and-twenty minutes.”

And thus endeavouring to turn the current of Anstruther's thoughts into a more joyous channel, I passed my arm through that of my friend, and together we proceeded towards the abbey.

“I think,” said Anstruther, with a forced smile upon his face, “that a gallop would do me more good than a game of billiards; we will order the horses after luncheon.”

“Oh! yes!—” I exclaimed joyously; “and I'll ride you a steeple-race to M—— church; but not upon the same conditions. I wish, Mr. Anstruther—”

“And I wish, dear Gerard,” interrupted my kind friend,—“that you would not call me *Mister* Anstruther.”

“Then, Anstruther”—

“No, Gerard, I am weak and foolish. You

will think me, perhaps, in my dotage ; but I like all those, whom I love very much, to call me by my Christian name. I say ‘all those,’ when there is but *one* in the world, by whom I desire thus to be addressed ; there is but one whom I love very much—and he—you, Gerard—must call me *Edwin*.”

“Edwin !”—and this was all that I could answer ; for I was almost stifled by the intensity of my emotions.

“Oh ! pleasant—very pleasant thus to be addressed ; I did not think, when my mother died, that I should ever be called *Edwin* again.”

I struggled against my feelings, and, at length, I triumphed. I re-assumed my outward serenity, and fearful lest Anstruther should again relapse into the despondency from which I had almost rescued him, when the respectful formality of my address re-awakened in his mind the bitter reflection of his almost solitary condition, I again began to talk cheerfully, nay, indeed, ridiculously ; garnishing my conversation with images the most remotely ludicrous that my fancy could suggest, and willingly incurring the risk of being esteemed flippant, in the hope of exciting the mirth of my friend. Thus doing a violence to my nature ; for very seldom, indeed, was I otherwise than most subdued, I returned towards the abbey, with my dejected friend, and ere we had crossed the

threshold of the house, a laugh, not loud, but plainly irresistible, burst from him, and I knew that I had succeeded.

The post-bags had already arrived at the abbey ; and amongst others there was one re-directed by my uncle Pemberton, from my generous friend Sir Reginald Euston. He wrote from London, whither he had just arrived from the Continent with his bride ; and he reminded me of my promise to meet him at Christmas, and said that, during his absence, he had often thought of me, and spoken of me so often to Lady Euston, that she was determined to see me at the hall, as *her* guest, during Christmas, "and therefore," added Sir Reginald, "you must come :

‘ For when a lady’s in the case,
You know all other things give place.’

Besides, we must talk over your future prospects ; and I must ask what you think of a certain appointment in the—but I will say nothing until you come —and, therefore, I say COME. Fix any day before Christmas ; and there shall be a carriage awaiting you at Exeter. Lady E. is very imperative ; and as this is her first request, you know that you cannot refuse it."

"Refuse? how can I refuse Reginald Euston?" but I thought of poor Edwin Anstruther.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BRIMMING OF THE WINE-CUP.

“ For these your favours done to me,
(Being a poor stranger,) my best powers shall prove
By acts of worth the soundness of my love.
—— Herein your love shall best set out itself
By staying with us.”

OLD FORTUNATUS.

I was no longer the ‘unloved one,’ yearning after blessings which were denied to me. I had asked for love, and I had not solicited in vain. My “golden chalice,” was almost full to the brim of “bright wine.”

Anstruther, Euston, my uncle Pemberton, my cousin Emily, Michael and Ella, I knew that they loved me ; and whom did I love most in return ?

ELLA MOORE!

How often have I wished that I could parcel out my individuality into divers portions, so as to be present in many places at one period of time. Love is for the most part jealous and exacting; it requires infinite tact to be loved by many, and yet to offend none.

Tact!—I scarcely think that I have ever traced the characters of this word before. I do not like it; 'tis one of those conventional words, which came in with the legitimacy of lies. When nature and truth were voted out of fashion, and art, with its kinswoman, hypocrisy, were exalted in their stead, then people began to exercise *tact*. *Tact* is nothing better than a combination of various artful subterfuges blended into one harmonious whole, and skilfully varnished over. I believe that it is useful to its possessor; but it is a possession I am well content to forego; for, whatever difficulties truth leads me into, I can cheerfully bear up against, and “steer right onward,” without a murmur.

But, when many love us, and desire our presence at the same time, what are we to do?—What we ought to do; to be candid and ingenuous, to speak out openly and sincerely. No subterfuges, no half-confessions, no compromises with truth; but full and entire honesty, concealing nothing, adding nothing, altering nothing; and

then, if we be not loved the better for our ingenuousness, we have not been loved at all.

“ Edwin ! ” —

“ My dear boy ! ” —

“ You have heard me speak of Sir Reginald Euston. ”

“ Oh ! yes ; you said that he has been kind to you ; methinks I could love him for *that*. ”

“ I have just had a letter from him ; will you read it, and tell me what I ought to do ? ”

Anstruther took the letter, and, reading it, his countenance became clouded over, until it settled into the old look of utter despondency, which it wore the first time I beheld him. I could see a tear slowly stealing down on either side of his pale thin face as he silently folded up the letter, and returned it to me, looking into my eyes with an appealing expression of fondness, which seemed to say, “ And will you too leave me alone ? ”

I felt at this moment that I could cleave to him for ever. Pitying and loving him as I did, to their very base were my resolutions shaken ; for he who had been kinder to me than any living creature, was now in an agony, from which a few words of mine could release him, and knowing this, I was almost tempted to utter those few words.

But Anstruther was the first to speak. “ Do you love this man, Gerard ? ” said he.

“ I do ; he was the first to take me by the hand, at a time when there were none to help me.”

“ He is gay and cheerful ; he keeps open house ; he hunts, shoots, and drinks like a man ; he is a meeter companion for you, than a broken-down creature like myself.”

“ Oh ! talk not in this strain, I beseech you ; for this is the language of mistrust. You cannot, I am sure you do not doubt the strength of my gratitude and affection. I trust in you ; for with a full assurance that you will tell me what it becomes me to do, I now ask your advice, and by your advice will I be guided.”

“ Then go—it becomes you, go ; I wish, I intreat you to go.”

With a choaking voice were these last words uttered, and had I not thought of Ella Moore, at this moment, I should have thrown myself into Anstruther's arms, and sobbed out, “ No,—never will I leave you !”

But, my love for Ella was very strong, and I panted to behold her once again. This it was, that, more than all other things, steeled my heart against the miseries of Anstruther. — No, not *steemed* it ; but my love for the cottage maiden, triumphed over my pity, my gratitude, and my affection for him who had been more than a father to me ; so I said, “ It wrings my heart, as it does yours, to think that we should ever be sundered ;

but what can I say to Reginald Euston? For many years he has been to me a friend; he stooped to succour me, when I was a companionless boy,—years before I knew you——.”

“ Oh! I know it, Gerard,” interrupted Anstruther, in a heart-rending voice, “ I am but a new friend, and it is asking too much, that you should give up your older ones for me. I am exacting and selfish;—I acknowledge it. I require too much in exchange for the little that I have to give. I do not reflect that I sacrifice nothing, by giving myself up wholly to you. I am desolate; there are many who love, many who are beloved by, *you*. I ought to take these things into account, and strike the balance more fairly—therefore, I say, Gerard, go. You see that I *can* make a sacrifice.—Go, go,—but you will return?”

“ Yes—and quickly—but for one month.”

“ A month—thirty days and nights, and all this time to be alone! but what is that to one like me, who, for fifteen years, has been companionless?”

“ ’Tis a little time.”

“ But a month,” continued Anstruther, despondingly, not hearing what last I had said.—“ A month, did you say—a whole long month? No, no, Gerard, not a month.”

“ ’Twill very soon pass away.”

“ Ah ! to you ; but it will be a century to me, it will indeed.”

“ Say a fortnight then—only a fortnight, to visit my family, and all.”

“ No, no ; I exact too much ; I am selfish—but you cannot tell, Gerard, what it is, after fifteen years of darkness, to enjoy a few glimpses of light. You cannot tell what it is to have that blessed stranger-light obscured, and to grovel in your old blindness again. But go—you will return in a month—and the food of hope shall sustain my soul in solitude, throughout all that time. A month then, be absent for a month—not one day longer, if you love me.”

“ I promise.”

“ And all this time no cheerful walks, no pleasant riding excursions, no merry games of billiards for me. To hear no droll stories from your lips, no flashes of wit and merriment, to see no smile upon your face, to hear not your ringing laughter,—to see you not, to hear you not at all, for a long dreary, interminable month. But, you will not go quite yet ; not to-day, nor to-morrow, nor next day.”

“ In a week.—Oh ! not before a week.”

“ And we will be merry, Gerard, till then. We will ride, and walk, and play at billiards, and laugh over the ‘ Comic Romance.’ Do you think that the horses are ready ?”

"They were ordered to be at the door after luncheon."

"True," cried Anstruther, rising from the sofa ; "and we have not lunched yet ; so come to the luncheon room. I do not think though, that I can eat."

"It wants yet an hour of the accustomed time, shall we anticipate it, or ride out at once, or go and have a game at billiards?"

"A game of billiards," returned Anstruther ; "we will play for an hour, and then take a gallop towards M——. Send for little Guido to score for us. I think that I shall beat you to-day."

And straightway we proceeded towards the billiard-room. Oh ! indeed, it is a hard trial to laugh, to jest, and to wear a smooth, joyous countenance, when the heart is well nigh bursting within. I was in wretched spirits, and I could have lain down, and wept like a child, at the very moment that I was talking wild nonsense, and knocking the billiard-balls about with an energy that could not have been surpassed, had my whole soul been in the game. For Anstruther's sake, I was constrained to appear joyous, and to do a violence against my own nature, more painful than language can express. I, who, my whole life long, had given vent to all the impulses of my

soul, now felt myself morally obliged to constrain them, and to play a part, which I had never done before. In truth, I was called upon to sacrifice over much, when Anstruther selected me to be his friend. I was a willing sacrifice. I was spell-bound, and I could not resist his appeals. He called upon me to sacrifice liberty, truth, gladness, health, and home—to change my nature, to be no longer young, to abandon all pleasure, all society, all love, beyond that which I could drink at his own fountain, and I felt that I was powerless to deny him. I had a sort of presentiment that I was killing myself; and that the kind of life that I was then leading, would hurry me into an early grave; but for all this, I did not turn aside from my purpose, I was resolute to persevere even to the death.

Once, and only once, during the week, which preceded the day of my departure, did Anstruther allude to the dreaded event, and then it was in language expressive of the admiration, and the more than gratitude which my kindness had awakened in his bosom. “To give up,” said Anstruther, “so much for me—how kind, how generous, how god-like!”

And the answer, which I returned, is explanatory of the guiding principle which actuated my behaviour towards my friend. “You are alone

and therefore will I cleave to you. Others love me, and others by me are beloved; but they all have more than one pillar supporting the structure of their love. Upon me, alone, do you lean; you say that I am all-in-all to you, but to others I am but one of a number. Take away my support from them, and still they stand erect; from you, and you fall prostrate in the dust. No, no—I will cling to *you*; and we will lean upon one another for ever.”

“My son—my adopted son!” sobbed Anstruther, as he laid his head upon my shoulder and wept.

And suddenly, as Anstruther uttered these words a ray of light, which had never shone there before, entered the dark places of my brain. I started, as though I had been seared with a hot iron, and disengaging myself from the embrace of my friend, I cried in harsh and hurried accents, “What was that you said, Mr. Anstruther?”

“My son! my heir! my adopted!”

“Thus ends, then, our covenant!” said I, the energy of my manner giving place to a subdued expression of bitter disappointment. “It is over; the spell is broken; and we can no longer live together as friends.”

“What mean you?—Oh! tell me, Gerard, the import of those strange words.”

“Listen,” said I, in a calm, clear voice; “listen.

I thought that I was honest; I thought that my love for you was pure gold, unmingled with the dross of selfishness; I thought that I clung to you because you lacked support; I thought that I dwelt with you because you were solitary. This faith can sustain me no longer. You speak of adoption, and call me your heir: can I any longer confide in the purity of my motives? I begin to mistrust myself already. You are rich, and I am a beggar; you are childless, and I worm myself into your affections. I am a legacy-hunter, a parasite, a rich man's minion. I bitterly despise myself already. The very servants will sneer at me; the lowest groom in the stable will point at me. The pleasant veil of delusion has been torn from my eyes, and the pillar of my faith knocked from under me. I dreamed that I was honest; and I awake from my dream, and find myself a pitiful scoundrel!"

"Gerard, Gerard! you talk wildly.—I do not comprehend what you mean."

"You called me your heir—your adopted one."

"And you are."

"Oh! no, no!—unsay those words, I beseech you. I must not, I will not, be your heir. Love me, but do not adopt me. Let me still be assured of my honesty; let me still feel that my motives for loving, and for clinging to you, are pure. Answer me, then, one question,—*Is it written?*"

"It is."

"Oh! too hasty!—I might have been a scoundrel, a designer;—but it can be undone, and that at the moment. *I* will do it. Give me the papers, and then I will prove to you that I am honest."

"Gerard, Gerard!" cried Anstruther; "I never doubted it for a moment."

"But perchance I may doubt myself; so give them to me; indeed, it will be kindest. I insist—or, if you would rather, I will quit your house, never to return to it."

There was an earnestness and a decision in my voice, and in my manner, which fully assured Mr. Anstruther that I would execute all that I threatened. But still he hesitated: he rose from his seat, looked towards the door, then at me, and reassumed his seat, in silence, as though he were in a painful state of incertitude. "Bring them, bring them," I repeated; then, pointing towards the fire, I added, "See how brightly it burns!"

Every muscle of Anstruther's face worked convulsively, as he replied, in a scarcely audible tone, "Yes, Gerard!—I will—bring them."

He walked, with tottering steps, towards the door, left the room, and presently returned with a scroll of parchment in his hand. "There, Gerard!—the struggle is over. I do not love you the less."

I did not look at the document, but threw it at

once upon the blazing fire. The parchment cracked, and blistered, and split; but it was long ere the tough skin was reduced to the nothingness of ashes. "Burn! burn!" said I.

"It will not be burnt," returned Anstruther;—"see how it clings to existence; and why destroy it? What a silly piece of mummary! Another slip of parchment, and another stroke of the pen;—why, Gerard, it costs you more time and more trouble to annihilate this old document, than it would take me to draw up a new one."

"Ha!—but it will surely perish soon; and you will not reproduce what I have destroyed.—Nay, nay, Edwin!" coaxingly, I added; "that would be hardly fair."

Anstruther answered not, and I continued:—"But you will promise?—I'm sure that you will, because I ask you, dear Edwin."

He looked at me, fondly, for a moment, and then faltered out, "I—do—promise."

And, at length, arrived the dreaded morning of my departure from Charlton Abbey. In my pleasant and beautiful studio, behold me preparing for my journey, little Guido assisting me, with an unshed tear glistening in his dark eye. The poor boy loved me with an idolatry which few but his countrymen ever feel. I had been kind to him; and his servitude had been an easy one. I had never spoken harshly to him, nor ever reprimanded

him, and I had conversed with him almost as with an equal. He could not bear to think of my departure; and his heart was heavy, though he knew that I would return. I could not but perceive the unhappiness of the boy; and perceiving it, my heart was melted into tenderness, and I took compassion on him. "Guido," I said, "would you like to accompany me into Devonshire?"

The boy's face brightened up, as he made answer,—"Oh! so much, sir!—so very much, indeed! But do you think, sir, that the strange servants will laugh at me, because I am a foreigner?"

I smiled, and returned, "Certainly not, in the house to which I am going."

"Then you *will* take Guido with you, sir?" said the young Italian, with an earnestness of manner which betrayed the excess of his delight.

"I will; you shall sit beside me in the carriage. You know that Mr. Anstruther has lent me his travelling-chariot, and that I am to post it to Exeter.—But what is this parcel of books?"

"Mr. Anstruther placed it on the table, Sir," replied little Guido, "this morning."

I took up the parcel; opened it, and there I found a collection of old quarto plays—original editions of John Marston's works, including his *Satyres*. On a small slip of paper, accompany-

ing the books, was written, "Give these to your father."

I was touched by this little act of kindness; and I began to ask myself whether my behaviour towards Anstruther had been all that it ought to have been—whether, in any one instance, I had failed in my duty towards my friend. And looking back upon all that had passed between us, I thought that I could detect a shadow of disingenuousness obscuring one part of my conduct, and that spite of my endeavours to be so, I had not been thoroughly consistent. And what was the evil thing that I had done?

I was about to leave Anstruther for a month, avowedly to visit Reginald Euston. I was anxious to see my family; but I was still more anxious to see Ella Moore. Now, I had not told Anstruther this; I had placed the necessity of my departure entirely to the score of my gratitude towards Sir Reginald; but I had said nothing of the undercurrent of desire more powerful than the visible stream of circumstances which propelled me in the direction that I was going. It is true, that had Sir Reginald entreated me to visit him, in any spot of the country, however far remote from that wherein Ella was living, I should, at least I *thought* that I should, have accepted his invitation with equal alacrity; but I did not rest satisfied with this belief; I had acted disingenuously in conceal-

ing part of the truth—in attributing the sole motive for my departure to my gratitude for Reginald Euston—in abstaining from any allusion to Ella Moore, as though my attachment to her had been criminal; and these misgivings sadly disquieted me, the more so because I esteemed my conduct, in all other respects, irreproachable.

To be conscious of having fallen into a single error is often more galling than the consciousness of many. It is a hard thing to be only one step from the summit of the ladder of perfection.

“ We get so near, so very, very near,
’Tis an old tale: Jove strikes the Titans down,
Not when they set about their mountain-piling,
But when another rock would crown their work.”

Running a race, or competing for any prize, it is less annoyance to be distanced than to be second. Ridiculous as it may appear, there is nothing in the world so disquieting as to select the next number in a lottery to that which procures the great prize. It is nothing to draw a blank; but the ticket next to the prize—oh! such a dispensation is intolerable.

Pondering these things with a heavy heart, I heard Anstruther’s well-known footsteps approaching my chamber-door. Then a sudden impulse seized me; and without reflecting, for a moment, upon the consequences of what I was about to do,

I said, within myself, "Come what will, my bosom shall be unburthened of the secret load that oppresses it; I will confess myself; every inmost thought and feeling shall be divulged in the presence of my friend."

He entered, and I dismissed Guido. With some little offering of kindness had Anstruther sought me in my studio; but I waited not to receive the offering, nor to acknowledge the kindness; I thought only of my disingenuousness, and I was impatient to wipe away the one leprous blot which sullied the purity of my soul. I had offended; and I was eager to atone for the offence that I had committed by acknowledging it. "Gerard, I have brought you," began Anstruther; but I interrupted him in an earnest and impassioned voice, exclaiming, whilst my chest heaved with emotion, and my eyes glistened with tears—"I do not deserve your kindness; I am unworthy,—ungrateful,—and I have cheated you—"

"Gerard!"

"I have imposed upon you, deluded you with a lie;—I have been an hypocrite, and I have grossly deceived you."

"No, no! Gerard—you cannot mean what you say;—you are all truth and openness, my boy."

"So you thought; but I am wily, and a hypocrite. I told you that I am forced to leave you, that I might visit Sir Reginald Euston."

“ Yes—and your family ; I read Sir Reginald’s letter—how can you have imposed upon me in this ? ”

“ Oh ! I have—I told you that I was anxious to see Sir Reginald, because he had been kind to me ; and *this* is true ; I told you that I desired to see my family, because I had been long absent ; and *this* is true : but, when, by pausing here, I implied that there were none others whom I panted to behold again, I deceived you ; I cheated you : for my heart tells me plainly, that there is one at least, whom more than Sir Reginald, more than all the members of the family, I love, and now yearn to embrace.”

Then rapidly I poured out the secret of my long-cherished love for Ella Moore. I traced the whole history of my passion from its earliest development to the day of my departure from Meadowbank, when Ella wept to think of my going. I spake of Mrs. Moore, of Michael and of Lawrence,—their condition, the manner of their lives, their lowliness, and yet their gentleness : I left nothing concerning them untold. Then I entered into the narrative, derived from my uncle, of General Kirby, and of his misguided wife ; I told him that Ella Moore was her daughter ; that she was not even the offspring of honest parents ; that, perhaps, she was a child of shame, but that still I loved her. I enlarged upon the beauty, the grace, the entire loveliness of the cottage-maiden.

I said that she would adorn a palace, that she was endowed with an innate perception of the becoming, which in the entire absence of all conventional knowledge, rendered her the gentlest of the gentle. I spake freely and in hurried accents, sometimes almost inaudible from emotion; I thought of nothing, but of unburthening my soul; my eyes swam in tears so that I could but dimly perceive the countenance of him whom I addressed. It was an honest impulse that urged me on; I was not then acting the inquisitor.

I had often dreamt that Ella Moore was the daughter of Edwin Anstruther; I had often prayed that my dreams might be realized. But now no vague, wild fancies of this nature entered my brain. I did not even think about the book,—the Erasmus, which connected,—yet how slender was the link!—the history of the Kirbys, and the Moores, with that of my mysterious friend.

It is a truth, that when I began to love Anstruther,—truly and entirely to love him, I ceased to regard him as a mysterious being, and I no longer desired to lift the veil of his sorrow. I cannot find it in my heart to act the spy towards one whom I love.

My story was told; from the secret burthen, which weighed so heavily upon my soul, I had now disengaged myself entirely, and I felt very happy in my freedom. I was silent, and I looked at Anstruther through my tears. He was

seemingly enveloped in a shroud of thought, for he spake not when my narrative was ended, and he was sitting with one elbow resting on his knee, whilst his clenched hand supported his head, and his eyes were looking fixedly upon the ground. Then I laid my hand gently upon his shoulder, saying, "Will you forgive me after this?"

He raised his head, and the expression of his face was that of mingled inquietude and affection, as he said, "Love needs not forgiveness—"

"But hypocrisy!"

"Nay, nay, Gerard; talk not about this, but about your love for the cottage-maiden. I am sadly disquieted upon your account, for you are in a strange and a dangerous position,—loving, and beloved by, a cottage-girl,—the offspring of an illicit connexion; you have grown up from boyhood to manhood, your love has grown with your growth, and strengthened with your strength; such love as this cannot be weeded out from the binding soil of your affectionate heart,—nor from hers; then what is to be the result of this unhappy attachment?"

"Unhappy!—oh! indeed it is not that; but a blessing above all other blessings is the pure love of Ella Moore."

"Ah! you think so; but tell me now, Gerard, what is the consummation of pure love?"

"Marriage."

“And will you marry this girl?”

I was not in the least startled by the question, and I answered unreservedly, “*I will.*”

Anstruther for a few moments was silent, and then he said in a serene voice—it was the serenity of intense feeling,—“Well, Gerard, I am not one who would advise you to control the genuine impulses of an honest nature, and to subject yourself to any conventional obligations which are likely to mar the happiness of your future. Methinks I know you well enough to be assured that with you to be loved is to be blest, and that beyond the pale of the affections, you desire very little to make the world to you a Paradise of delight. Gerard, I cannot exhort you to cast off this cottage girl;—love on, but with all honesty,—love, and continue to be loved. What need you fear? Not poverty; it is not possible that you should ever be poor. The contumely of the world? A feather! Let the world prate; you will know that you are honest, and to *be* is better than to *seem*. The reproaches of your family? If Ella Moore resemble the creature that you have described, your family, to a member, will love her, and be proud of her; for what does it matter that she has once dwelt in a cottage? Princes ere now have done the same. You say that she is gentle, graceful, and lovely,—that she has mind, and heart, and beauty,—that——”

“Oh! yes,” I exclaimed, eagerly breaking in upon Anstruther’s discourse,—“she is everything, and more than I have described,—she is the very essence of feminine loveliness,—she is—but more than all language, a picture will convey to you what I mean.—I have her portrait; I painted it myself; ’tis a rude specimen of art, but it shadows forth, though faintly indeed, the beauty of the original, and in line and colour it is a likeness which all who see it judge to be correct.”

As I said this, I unlocked my writing-case and took from it my portrait of Ella. I had painted it a few days before my departure from Meadowbank, partly from life and partly from memory, and the likeness was strikingly correct. It was a full-length portrait, and I had drawn her sleeking the plumage of a dove. The idea was commonplace, but the occupation was graceful, and thus I had seen her employed but a short time before I entered upon my pleasant labour of love. A wood-pigeon maimed and mutilated, but alive, had dropped from the wing in Mrs. Moore’s garden, and Ella, who, all tenderness and compassion, had a heart to pity the meanest thing in the creation, if distressed, had raised the crippled bird, and nursed it until it was again able to fly. Once I saw her fondling her wounded favourite, and seeing her, I cried out, “Oh! Ella, how I should like to paint you thus!”

And thus I did paint her. "Now is not that beautiful—face and figure both?" I exclaimed, as I put into Anstruther's hand my portrait of Ella Moore.

"My God! and is *this* Ella Moore?" cried Anstruther, in a choaking voice, trembling all over as he spoke, "My,—my—my," and though his lips moved, what he would have said was wholly inaudible. Covering his face with both his hands, he threw himself back in his seat; his chest dilated, and then sunk again, a loud groan succeeding every anhelation. Fear and astonishment took possession of me, and all that I could articulate was "Edwin!" I was pale, and powerless, as a marble statue. I could neither act, nor move, nor speak. But what could I have done, had my energies not forsaken me? Oh! nothing; for these violent paroxysms, like volcanoes, must burn themselves out, and it is as easy to control the one, as it is to mitigate the other. I had seen him before in an agony of a like nature, though much less fearful than this; and I knew, if the confusion of ideas, which accompanies a great alarm, can properly be designated knowledge, that the sight of Ella's portrait, by some strange power of association, had jarred, with a painful crash, upon the chords of poor Anstruther's mind, now wrought into an extreme state of tension. It was evident, that a sudden rush of agonizing

thoughts had overwhelmed him; but the nature of those overwhelming thoughts was a subject of after speculation.

Silently watching the wretched man, I saw the tears gushing through his fingers, as he still veiled his face with his hand. He wept aloud; and it was good for him that he did so, for much better is it to sob than to groan; and that dry, tearless sorrow is the most heart-breaking of all. He wept, and I feared no longer, for I knew that the paroxysm of Anstruther's grief, would expand itself in a torrent of tears. And thus it happened; for when he had wept awhile, he withdrew his hands from his streaming eyes, and looked wildly round the chamber, as though he were awaking from a fearful dream, and not yet fully assured of his consciousness, he said in a voice scarcely rising above a whisper, "Gerard, what have I been doing?"

To this question I made no answer; and Anstruther, laying his hand upon my arm, continued in a more audible voice, "What a poor fool you must think me! I am fit only to be the inmate of a mad-house. I do not know for what purpose I am kept alive in the world, a torment to myself, and a curse to all around me, cut off by the strangeness of my nature—no, no, no; not my nature, but my destiny, from the congregation of my fellows. I think that it would be much better

for me to lay myself down and die. What need is there that I, a wretched old man, should live but to blast the promise of your joy,—a canker, a blight, an unwholesome mildew. I came hither, meaning to be cheerful, and I—;” then as though he suddenly recollected the exciting cause of the paroxysm, that had seized him, he continued no more to speak in vague, general terms, but soliloquizing, rather than addressing himself to me, he added, “It was a portrait, yes, a portrait—so very like, but how can that be? Form, feature, all like *hers*; the same soft smile upon her face; the same—. You said, Gerard, that her name is Ellen Moore.”

“Ella Moore.”

“And a pretty name too. Now give me the picture again, for I should like to look at it for a moment. I did not think that you were such a good artist. I could almost think that it breathes. I wonder, Gerard, what it could have been that brought that *fit* so suddenly upon me. You see that I can look at the picture;—I once was a painter myself. To-morrow we will go out sketching; there are some good views to be had in the neighbourhood, and I will send to M——, for some books.”

“To-morrow?—You forget that I am going—”

“Going?—Where are you going?” interrupted the wretched man, for he was wandering, and his

memory was clouded. "I thought I heard you speak of going somewhere to-morrow."

"Oh! you forget," said I, in a tremulous voice, "now think a little. This is the day, that was determined upon, for my departure into Devonshire. The chariot is to be here at noon; you know that you have lent me your chariot.—So good of you!—Now, just think."

"To be sure.—Ha, ha!—how ludicrous, that I should have forgotten. I think that I am the most absent person that ever lived in the world. At twelve o'clock;—oh! yes, I remember all about it. The chariot—Devonshire—and Sir Reginald Euston. That fit has quite confounded my intellect. And you will write to me *very* soon—a good long letter, remember; *crossed*, and as close as you like. I came here to bring you last evening's papers, and the new number of the *Edinburgh Review*; don't forget to have them stowed in the pocket of the carriage; as they may amuse you during the journey. There is an article of Brougham's in the Review; and a joint-stock composition, by Messrs. Jeffery and Hazlitt. Just lend me that *aigrette* of yours. I feel, now, perfectly recovered."

CHAPTER XX.

THE SECRET REVEALED.

“ Now, since we are alone, let us examine
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt——

It is a hidden secret,
Which I must fathom.”

SHELLEY.

IMAGINE, kind reader, that my journey is accomplished, that I have crossed the hospitable threshold of my old friend Reginald Euston, and am once more in the neighbourhood—the pleasant neighbourhood of my family, and the Moores.

No contrast was ever more complete, than that which the mirth and jollity of Fox Hall presented to the gloom of Charlton Abbey. A thousand similes come swarming upon my brain; but I cannot pause to select one from the crowd. I

think that the transit from the one place to the other was certainly the salvation of my health, for during my sojourn with Anstruther, I had become pale, feeble, and emaciated. My constitution was naturally vigorous, but such a life as I led at the Abbey was sufficient to induce a decline of the vital energies, which, but for an occasional digression into more cheerful scenes, might have hurried me into a premature grave.

But in Fox Hall I breathed an atmosphere of cheerfulness. Sir Reginald had only anticipated my arrival by a few days, bringing with him his beautiful bride; and the whole neighbourhood was in bustle and confusion. There was to be a large party of gentry at the Hall, during Christmas week, and the poor were to be sumptuously regaled with beef and other welcome esculents. Blankets were to be distributed, and oxen roasted, and coals given away. Every body in the neighbourhood, rich and poor, was in a flutter of expectation and excitement, precisely identical with that of the army, on the eve of a brevet.

Sir Reginald received me with open arms, and presented me to Lady Euston, who cordially extended her hand, whilst a sweet smile of welcome played upon her beautiful mouth. She was, indeed, a fair creature—a perfect woman—gentle, feminine, and yielding, but neither weak nor indolent, as pretty women generally are. I do not

think that I ever beheld her reclining upon a sofa in my life.

She was the daughter of Mrs. Moore.

And she was like her mother. Sometimes too, though rarely, there was that in her face which re-awakened in my mind the memory of Lawrence Moore. I looked upon her with a painful degree of interest; and being possessed of a knowledge which was shared neither by her, nor by her husband—a knowledge of circumstances, most important, immediately relating to herself, I began to experience a sort of tremulous uneasiness in her presence, and when she shook me by the hand, upon the night of my arrival, before she retired to her chamber, my arm trembled so perceptibly that she asked me whether I was cold.

But when she had quitted the drawing-room it suddenly rushed upon my mind, that whatever I intended to do in this emergency, it behoved me to do quickly. I thought of the evil that might result from an accidental collision between the mother and the daughter, and I deemed that it would be far wiser in me to acquaint Sir Reginald with the whole history, than to suffer him, from motives of false delicacy, to remain any longer in his dangerous ignorance. So I said to him, as I wished him good night, “Sir Reginald, I should like very much to talk with you a little, in my bed-room, before you retire to rest.”

“Precisely what I was about to propose,” replied the Baronet, a bright smile animating his fine open countenance. “Oh! yes, Gerard, I have so much to tell you; for since we parted, in the spring, my life has been somewhat eventful. I will be with you, before you have had time to put your hair in paper, my boy, for I’m sure that you do paper your hair, or it would never curl so beautifully as it does.”

“Nay, Sir Reginald; nature always is more beautiful than art.”

“Perhaps,” replied the Baronet; “but a fine horse is never the worse for being well groomed.”

I retired to my chamber, and I had not long been there, when Sir Reginald entered the room. Seeing little Guido, who was arranging the things upon my toilet-table, he called the boy to him and said, “Do you find that my servants are kind to you, Guido, and that they let you have every thing you wish?”

“Oh! yes, Sir,” replied the boy, “they are very, very kind, indeed. Mr. Doveton told me that they would be, and I find them, Sir, just what he said.”

“Have you made a friend, yet, of Lopez, my valet?” asked the Baronet; you will love one another, for your country’s sake.”

“Oh! I do, sir; I love him already; but I am a stranger—more English than Italian;—I ought

to love England best, for I have met with a world of kindness there ; but, somehow or other—I cannot help it, — my heart travels back to my birth-place.” And as the boy uttered these words, his dark eyes became lustrous with tears.

Then Sir Reginald, turning round, and addressing himself to me, I dismissed Guido, and said to the baronet, “ This is a strange little fellow, but a good and a grateful one. He expected that your servants would laugh at him ; but I knew that there was no cause for his fears. *Dignum patella operculum*,* as the old Roman proverb expresses it.”

“ And a true proverb it is,” returned the baronet ; “ but what do you think a poor creature once said, in his ignorance, of me ? ”

I could not guess ; and Sir Reginald continued : “ He was sure that I was not much of a gentleman, *because* I was so uncommonly civil.”

“ Now, this observation,” said I, “ might furnish much food for reflection. Resulted it from ignorance, or from knowledge ? was it the growth of plebeian prejudice—of a foregone conclusion ? or was it not rather the offspring of experience—the—”

But the baronet interrupted me, with a hearty slap upon the shoulder, exclaiming, “ My dear

* ‘ The cover matches the dish.’ This proverb corresponds with the ‘ Like master, like man,’ of our own country.

Gerard, I would not have told you the anecdote, had I thought that you would have drawn therefrom any philosophical inferences. I came here not to generalize, but to individualize; and therefore let us talk of *ourselves*—doubtless, no ordinary individuals. Deposit yourself in that soft arm-chair with the white coverlid, and draw near to the fire. Closer still; and I will confront you. There, with our knees meeting before the blazing fire, we look the very picture of social comfort: we look like two friends, as we have been, are, and it shall not be my fault if I lie, when I add—and ever will be. You cannot conceive, Gerard, how happy I am to have you with me. Now, laugh; I wish to see you laugh: you were always a melancholy boy. How well I remember the first day that I felt my heart yearning towards you. Can you recall to your recollection the squeeze of the hand that I gave you in the summer-house, at Meadow-bank? I never pressed any body's hand in that manner, without afterwards loving him dearly. How strange it is, that we should have become friends!—our natures so unlike each other's, and I so much older than yourself. I think that the love, which we cannot account for, is always the strongest of all: I do not like a logical attachment. But, come, Gerard, *say something*; I wish to hear the music of your voice.

You invited me hither, and said that you had something particular to tell me."

"And so I had; but not now. Go on; for I like to hear you."

"Not another word, until you have spoken; for I'm sure that you have something to communicate. I never saw a grave face, like yours, which foretold not an important communication."

"Then I will speak out, and now. It were little use to defer the fulfilment of a duty, however unpleasant it may be."

"Unpleasant!" and Sir Reginald's smile of animation passed away from his handsome countenance.

"Yes; it is a very strange thing, that I, by a concurrence of fortuitous circumstances, should have arrived at the knowledge which I am about to communicate to you, who, above all other persons, are the one whom it most becomes me to acquaint with it. I wish that it had fallen to the lot of another"—

"Gerard! my dear Gerard!" interrupted the baronet, leaning forward as he spoke, and affectionately pressing my hand; "speak out, at once, whatever you may have to tell me; for I cannot bear this beating about the bush."

Then, obeying Sir Reginald's injunctions, I outspoke: "What I would tell you, relates to your

wife. It is strange that I should know her history even better than you know it yourself. She is the daughter of General Kirby."

"Why, Gerard, you do not suppose that I am ignorant of the parentage of my wife?"

"Oh! no, no; I do not suppose that; but Mrs. Kirby—do you know the history of her far too eventful life?"

"I do. She offended against her husband, and her God: she betook herself to the paths of infamy—"

"And her paramour was—"

"A private soldier," returned the baronet, somewhat harshly;—"you see that I know all this full as well as you know it yourself. Why, Gerard, do you awaken in my mind the memory of this wretched history? I know it; I grieve for it; but I cannot alter it: and my Emma is none the less pure, because years ago her mother went astray."

"God forbid that I should think so, Sir Reginald. I do not speak of these things wantonly; I would fain not have alluded to them at all. You wrong me, if you suppose that I am prating for the mere purpose of displaying my knowledge; but let me, at once, hurry on to the announcement that it is now my painful duty to make. Do you know the name of Mrs. Kirby's paramour?—of the soldier with whom she eloped?—It was Moore."

"I did not know that; but the man is dead."

“ He is;—and the widow Moore, who lives at Grasshill, is the mother of Lady Euston.”

“ Good God ! Gerard,—my mother-in-law?—If this be true, I do not wonder that you should have hesitated to make the announcement. But what makes you think that it is so?—Gerard, now tell me all. I always thought that the widow Moore was something much better than she seemed. I *did* wrong you when I spoke harshly just now; for this is, indeed, an important communication, and I cannot thank you enough for having made it; but who told you—whence did you derive this knowledge?—Are you sure that it is quite true?”

“ I will tell you;” and succinctly as possible I narrated the history that I had derived from my uncle. It was true that I had only a basis of circumstantial evidence whereon to rest the pillar of my faith; but that evidence was very conclusive; and it was almost impossible that I should have been mistaken. The time and place of Moore’s death—the account of Mrs. Kirby’s classical attainments—her love for the writings of Jeremy Taylor—the age of her children exactly corresponding with the time of her elopement—all these things combined, made up a case so strong, that Sir Reginald, when my story was ended, neither cross-examined me, nor commented upon my evidence, but at once exclaimed, “ What are we to do?”

And then we took counsel together. A thousand plans were proposed, and one after another rejected. Was it possible to remove the widow Moore from Grass-hill—to procure her an asylum in some alms-houses—to send Michael to college—and Ella; what was Ella to do? Whenever *her* name was mentioned, I turned aside my head to conceal my emotion. At one time I was on the point of acknowledging my passion; at another, I was almost impelled to express my indignation aloud, when Sir Reginald proposed a scheme for the removal of the Moores, which allotted Ella to some servile occupation. Far into the night we conversed, but failed to mature a plan of operation. “Something must be done,” said Sir Reginald; “but what is that something to be?”

“Oh!” I exclaimed: for it suddenly flashed upon my mind, that there was something very heartless in our deliberations,—“let us bring them together—let the daughter, proudly defying the world, acknowledge her penitent mother. Mrs. Kirby, through long years of sorrow, doing penance for the evil that she hath done, has walked in the ways of God, and is living a new life unto salvation. Long ere this, she has been forgiven above, and shall there be a sterner censorship here below?”

And the generous nature of Sir Reginald Euston triumphed over all conventional misgivings. One

struggle—and all his selfish fears, all his scruples of false delicacy, all his individual apprehensions passed away, and a nobler train of emotions held dominion over his great heart. “What I ought to do, that I dare do,” he thought; “I have courage to do my duty.”

He no longer doubted; he was convinced that he ought to acknowledge the mother of his wife—that he ought to forgive the repentant sinner, and to exalt her from the lowly condition to which her past errors had degraded her. What did it matter to him whether the world prated?—why, let it prate—about “strange disclosures” and “singular discoveries,” as long as his conscience told him that he had acted as it behoved him to act.

But in these resolves, all generous as they were, something there was of a suicidal nature. It was doubtful, though Sir Reginald doubted not, whether that which was so benevolent in intention would prove beneficent in action. Generosity is rarely a nice calculator, and the noblest impulses, if they subside not prematurely into the reaction of a purpose unaccomplished, are too often nothing better than the parents of fool-hardy and self-frustrating adventures. The offspring of a sudden impulse, if it prove not an abortion, surviving is almost sure to be—a monster. Sir Reginald saw nothing in what he was about to do, but justice and generosity meeting one another,

—it seemed to him, that by claiming Mrs. Moore as his mother-in-law, he would be doing an act of the greatest kindness at the same time that he was doing his duty. But this I doubted, and doubting I outspoke, for I was resolute to utter all that occurred to me. “Yet, think you not, Sir Reginald,” said I, “that it will be kinder to suffer this history still to remain a thing unknown? ‘Think you not—’”

But Sir Reginald interrupted me. “Kinder!—how kinder? to whom?”

“To Mrs. Moore.”

“No! surely not, Gerard;—how can it be kinder, do you think, to keep a mother from her child?”

“Ah!” I exclaimed, for my heart misgave me that my view of the case was a narrow one;—“the mother,—you say rightly,—perhaps the mother will triumph over all. But that her history should be blazoned to the world,—that her infamy should be made known,—that she should be pointed at, as an evil woman, an adulteress,—that curiosity should investigate, and envy disseminate the strange facts composing her history;—surely these will be hard trials, and they must be undergone if you acknowledge her as the mother of your wife. And Lady Euston too—”

“Stay, Gerard, stay,—you are now dissuading me from that to which, but a few moments ago, you

exhorted me—but in these extremities I know that we are often miserably inconsistent. A thing appears to be good,—we examine it, and find that it is evil. You were impetuous,—I was impetuous; we are calmer now,—wiser and more rational. Look you, Gerard. *I* am ready to make *any* sacrifice. I cast all selfishness away; and think only of my wife and her mother. To Emma the truth shall be divulged,—she is innocent,—she has never offended, and therefore to her is due the right, I think, of deciding whether this reunion of mother and daughter shall, or shall not, be brought about. I know well what her answer will be; and when it is given, upon you shall devolve the duty of acquainting Mrs. Moore with the strange discovery you have made, and of eliciting the nature of her desires. Gerard, will you undertake this?”

“I will; I think that you are right. Consult Lady Euston first; but how difficult it is to legislate for the passions. We may devise for others; but small chance is there that what we have devised will be executed. We cannot judge by our own feelings,—we cannot say ‘This ought to be, and doubtless therefore it will be the result of our machinations.’ Sir Reginald, it is very difficult to direct the course of our own emotions into a given channel, but to direct those of others is impossible.”

“I am not sure, Gerard, that you are right,”

returned the baronet.—“ I think that it is easier to control another’s passions than our own. But there is little use in arguing the abstract question ; we have devised, and we must endeavour to execute. You have not yet seen your parents.”

“ No—I must go there to breakfast in the morning, and then I will go to the Moores.”

“ But you must be cautious, and await your opportunity. I do not desire that you should do this immediately,—a day or two is of no importance, as I will be watchful, lest chance should direct the footsteps of my wife to the cottage. I am not much disquieted by this intelligence, for I have hopes that it will all terminate as we desire. I do not think that I shall ever have cause to be ashamed of my newly discovered connections.”

“ Oh ! no—that I’m sure you will not, for the aristocracy of nature was never exemplified more beautifully than in the family of the Moores.”

END OF VOL. II.

DOVETON.

VOL. III.

DOVE TON;

OR,

5

THE MAN OF MANY IMPULSES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JERNINGHAM."

"I speak
Of what I know and what we feel within."
WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL,
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DOVETON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FITTING ON OF THE GLASS SLIPPER.

“ I have attained and now I may depart.”

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

BEFORE any single member of my family had appeared in the lower regions of our house, I had found my way, on the following morning, to Meadow-bank. My father was the first to welcome me. In his dressing gown and slippers, he came rushing into the drawing-room, and whilst his eyes glistened with tears, and his voice faltered with emotion, he threw his arms around my

neck, and blessed me. "My poor boy! my Gerard!—how overjoyed I am to see you—and you have prospered too; wherever you have wandered, the good qualities of your nature have been triumphant, and have been nobly rewarded. I thought that the world would do you justice. I thought that friendship, would smile upon you, and love caress you, my Gerard. And how long do you intend to stay amongst us?—*A month.* What, only a month! and you are engaged all this time to Sir Reginald Euston."

"Oh! but I shall often see you.—But tell me, how is my mother, and how is Arthur, and how are my sisters?"

"All well—all very well, Gerard; but now, do tell me more about yourself."

And then, at the request of my father, I began to indulge in a little pleasurable egotism. I spoke of my uncle's great kindness to me, and of Anstruther's singular attachment toward me. I told of him of my adventure at Croydon fair, and, indeed, of almost all that I had done, except the perpetration of my novel, and upon this subject I was scrupulously silent. I had a motive for acting as I did—that motive was not a very virtuous one, for it was a mixture of vanity and pride. I little thought that my desire would be very speedily fulfilled; but so it happened that I tarried not long for its fulfilment.

“ Shall I soon see my mother ? ” I asked.

“ I doubt it, Gerard ; she signified her intention, last night, of breakfasting in her chamber. She sate up very late, indeed, to finish a book which she declared it to be actually impossible to lay down. I never knew her so interested in my life ; she is not a great reader, you know ; but nothing could tear her from this book. The girls, too, are quite mad about it ; and Arthur, declares it to be the most ‘ bang-up thing ’ he ever read in his life.”

“ A novel, I suppose—.”

“ Yes,—a novel.”

“ And the name of it ? ”

“ DRAYTON, THE DREAMER.”

I will not attempt to describe what I felt upon hearing this announcement. And they had actually read my book in utter ignorance of its author ? This was what I desired ; unprejudiced, they had read it, and with one accord they had pronounced a verdict in its favour. My sisters had wept, and Arthur had gloated, over it ; and my mother had been so absorbed in its perusal, that she had denied herself many hours of her accustomed sleep, an event almost unparalleled in the history of my mother’s life. Was not this a triumph ? I was exceeding proud, and I began to think of the means whereby I might divulge my important secret, with the greatest possible effect. I already

had waited long enough; that which I had so long desired was now thoroughly accomplished. Unwittingly my mother and my sisters had acknowledged my claims, and I was satisfied. They could not now revoke their sentence. "The despised one," I said inwardly, "is triumphant!"

And my sisters presented themselves at breakfast. They asked me many questions, relating to the goings-on of the metropolitan world; whether I had seen the King, the Lord Chancellor, Mr. Fauntleroy, and Daniel O'Connell; whether bonnets were worn large or small; and whether Grosvenor Square was getting out of fashion. To all these interrogatories I responded very satisfactorily. I hate answering questions; yet I am very patient when they are asked.

"But have you read '*Drayton the Dreamer*'?" asked my younger sister, who aspired to be a Blue.

"Yes," I replied, with an air of indifference.

"And what do you think of it?"

"So-so; rather a trashy affair, but better than some I have read."

"Much you know about it," said my sister Laura, indignantly; "if you could write anything a hundredth part as good, you might think yourself a very clever fellow."

"Very likely," I responded, with a smile; "but I, you know, was always a dull one."

“ Oh, no !” said my father ; “ not a dull one—never a dull one.”

“ But what do they say,” asked my sister Fanny, “ about ‘ *Drayton the Dreamer*,’ in town ?”

“ Oh ! they say that it is tolerable ; but—”

“ But you have not comprehension enough, to analyze its beauties,” said one of my sisters.

“ Do you know who wrote it ?” asked the other.

“ Oh ! I’m sure that I should love the author, if I knew him,” cried both of the young ladies, in a breath.

“ I believe,” said I, “ that he is a very young man ; and, as such, we may hope better things from him.”

“ *Better things!*—nothing can be better, I am sure, than ‘ *Drayton the Dreamer*.’”

“ But don’t you know his name ?” asked my sister Laura ; “ you ought to know it ; for he has dedicated his book to your friend, Mr. Edwin Anstruther.”

This last sentence was rather an embarrassing one ; I did not know what to answer ; and I stammered when I made the attempt.—“ I have heard it—but I don’t know—that is to say, I have forgotten it.”

My time had not yet arrived ; my harvest was not ready for the sickle.

Breakfast over, my mother made her appearance with the last volume of my book in her hand. She

seemed, like my two sisters, disposed to talk upon no other subject, and wound up a long critical discourse, with "Oh ! how proud I should be, if one of *my* sons could write such a book !"

"And who knows, but that one of them may ?" said my father, glancing significantly at me.

"Stuff !" ejaculated my mother ; "and yet they do say that dear Arthur gets on marvellously at Eton. He was 'shown up for good,' as they call it, and got five shillings for his verses."

I smiled ; and then turning to my father, I inquired after his Marston, which had now been many years on the stocks, and which still, I believed, was incomplete.

"I am at a stand-still," replied my father, "for want of a copy of the *Malcontent* ; and I have not got the original editions of the Satires."

"Oh !" I exclaimed in accents of joy ; "the deficiency will soon be repaired ;—my good friend, Mr. Anstruther, thinking that you might need them, has sent you a complete set of John Marston's works, and respectfully begs your acceptance of them. Plays, satires, everything he has written ; I have got them for you at the Hall."

"Oh ! how very good of him," cried my father, his eyes glistening with joy as he spoke ; and he would have added more, had not my mother interrupting him, exclaiming,

"I think it would have been better had he sent

something of more use to us all than a number of old, musty plays, which no one but your father will look into."

I was very much hurt by the selfishness and indelicacy of this observation. I blushed for my mother, but I was scrupulously silent. My father turned aside his head, for he also was much wounded by the remark. My sisters, however, appeared to sympathize with the feelings of their mother. There was a silence; but Mrs. Doveton did not suffer it to endure very long, for presently she said to me, "By the bye, what sort of a man is this Mr. Anstruther of yours?"

"Is he handsome?" asked my elder sister.

"Is he a man of genius?" asked the younger.

"He is both," said I.

"And rich?" asked my mother.

"Yes, very."

"And he has no children?"

I had a suspicion that I was not uttering the truth when I replied to this question, "None."

"He is a widower, I think," said my mother; "do you know whether the estates are entailed?"

"I don't think that they are, and yet I am not sure;—on second thoughts, I think that they may be."

"This is one of your explicit answers," returned my mother in her peculiar sarcastic voice, "for which you are so famous, Gerard, and have been

even since you were a child. One would have thought that any body but yourself would have inquired into these affairs the first thing. You don't know what a chance you are letting slip,—now do rouse yourself a little. Fortune seems disposed to smile upon you, and yet you turn a deaf ear to her advances. I should not wonder that, if you were to *try hard*, Mr. Anstruther would make you his heir. By the bye, Gerard, don't you think that you could get him to invite dear Arthur to spend his next holidays at Charlton Abbey."

"I could get him to do anything that I desire," said I, endeavouring with all my might to stifle my just indignation.

"Then do put in a word or two for Arthur;—*do*, there's a good boy."

"But where is Arthur?" said I.

"He went off on a shooting expedition before it was light," returned my mother. "He *would* go,—nothing could persuade him to give it up, though I begged and prayed him to stay at home. I do so hate those horrid fire-arms; I am always so afraid of their bursting."

At this moment, one of our maid-servants entered the room, bringing with her a small parcel for me. It was from Anstruther: it had just arrived at the Hall, and Sir Reginald had forwarded it to me by one of his grooms. I knew the hand-writing of the superscription; but as I had only left Charlton

Abbey on the preceding morning, it appeared strange to me that I should thus early receive a communication from my generous friend. "What have you got there?" asked my mother.

"A parcel from Mr. Anstruther," I replied.

"Most likely something or other you have left behind you," said Mrs. Doveton. "I never yet knew you set out upon a journey without leaving something behind."

This was very true; and it was very probable, indeed, that my mother's surmises were correct. "I dare say," said I, "that you are right, and that this parcel contains something that I have forgotten."

A little thing excites the curiosity of a woman; and my mother and sisters were not the least curious of their sex. I could plainly see that they were intensely desirous to witness the opening of my parcel; and as I had no wish to disappoint their expectations, I broke the seals, cut the string asunder, and had soon satisfied the curiosity of the party, and discovered the fallacy of my mother's conjectures.

"It is only a parcel of magazines, after all," exclaimed my mother, with an air of disappointment.

"Is the *Magazin des Modes* there?" inquired my elder sister.

I smiled at my sister's French, and said, "I should think not." Then tearing open the letter,

which accompanied the parcel, I read that which caused the pulses of my heart to throb with unwonted rapidity, and my whole frame to thrill with intensest emotion. "My hour has come, at last," I soliloquized. "I have triumphed; and now my triumph shall be manifested."

I opened one of the magazines, and said, addressing myself to my mother, in a voice slightly tremulous with excitement, "You were talking about 'Drayton the Dreamer,'—should you like to see *a portrait of the author?*"

"Oh, yes!—very much, indeed!—pray show it to me—I am dying to see it;—quick, there's a good boy!"

And my sisters echoed the words of their mother: they were all "dying" to see the portrait of him who wrote "*Drayton the Dreamer.*" But had I such a portrait to show them? *I had.* At Anstruther's request, I had sat to an artist for my picture. It was a full-length portrait, and an admirable likeness. Anstruther cherished it more than all his jewels of art.

He had caused it to be engraved;—this I knew not;—and mainly through his interest, I conjecture, the engraving had just made its appearance as one of a "Gallery of Literary Portraits," embellishing the ——— Magazine.

The magazines did not arrive at Charlton Abbey

till some hours after my departure, but Anstruther had forwarded them immediately by the mail.

"Oh! *do* let us see the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*," cried my mother and both of my sisters, in a breath.

"I have pictured him to my mind's-eye," said my sister Laura, "as a beautiful youth, with long flowing hair, and a Byron-like expression of countenance."

"Then, I fear, you will be disappointed," said I; "for he is almost as ugly as I am."

"It is impossible that he should be ugly," returned Laura; "there must be 'the mind, the music breathing from his face,' as Byron says."

"No more mind, and no more music, than there is to be seen in mine," I replied.

"But why don't you let us judge for ourselves?" asked my mother, extending her hand for the magazine.

"Because you will be disappointed when you see it. The actual falls far short of the ideal."

"Oh! never mind; we will take our chance, and we will not blame you for dispersing the illusion."

"Well, then, you *shall* see it. Behold the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*!"

And as I said this, I threw myself into the attitude which the artist had chosen for my picture.

I wore precisely the same style of dress as in the portrait; so that there was nothing to mar the excellence of the likeness. "Now, mother, look at the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*, and then look at your son!"

My mother took the book into her hand.—"Why, Gerard, it's like you!—it has your nose, your forehead, your mouth.—How very strange!—It has hair, too, like yours; it has—"

"Look at me, mother."

And my mother *did* look at me. "Why, Gerard, it is just your attitude—your everything—it is, it must be, yet no; it cannot be. Oh! it is your picture."

"Gerard's picture!" and my sisters started up, and looking over the shoulder of their mother, they glanced at me, and then at the picture, and said, "It is wonderfully like."

"What does all this mean?" asked my father.

I continued in my old attitude, and smiled. My father rose from his seat, and he also looked at the picture. He doubted not for one moment. *His* heart did not misgive him. He believed what he desired to be true; and was convinced, at once, that he beheld in his son the original of the portrait, before him—the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*.

He burst into a flood of tears, and threw his

arms around my neck. "Oh ! Gerard, it is your picture, and you are he—the author of the book. I always thought that you had genius. I always thought that you would, some day or other, be a shining light in the world. I knew that I should have reason to be proud of you—but why were you so secret ? Could you not confide in your poor father ? Could you not have unburthened yourself to me ?"

"Or, to me ?" said my mother, with a sigh, the meaning of which I knew not how to interpret.

"But, are you *really* the author of *Drayton the Dreamer* ?" asked my sister Laura ; "it is certainly an extraordinary resemblance, a very extraordinary resemblance, indeed,—but such things have been, before now, and—— but just move your hand, mamma, there is an autograph under the portrait."

"And what name does it character ?" I asked, with a triumphant look of exultation on my face.

My father snatched the book from the hand of his wife, and as he glanced at the autograph, he answered my question. "Whose name is written there ?" I asked.

"The name of GERARD DOVETON—*my son*."

I arose from my seat, and walked towards the window. I knew not whether I was happy, or was miserable. Of a certainty, I had triumphed

gloriously; but a kind heart delighteth not in triumph; and now, many bitter reminiscences rushed, with a sickening influence, upon my soul, and I reproached myself for my long-abiding reserve—my mistrust—my evil-minded vindictiveness—and all the vile cravings of my mortified vanity. I thought how much better it would have been, if I had confided my cherished hopes to my parents, and suffered them to sympathize with their son. The kind reproaches of my father unmanned me: I felt that I had treated him with scorn, and ingratitude—that I ought to have confided my secret to him, if to none beside, and thinking of these things, I was exceeding sorrowful, and I turned my face towards the window, and wept.

“Gerard, Gerard,” said my mother, “now tell me all about your book.”

I wiped away my tears, and walked toward the sofa, on which my mother was sitting. I sate down beside her, and taking one of her hands into mine, I kissed her upon the cheek, and said, “Forgive me; I have been very wrong, indeed; I ought to have had no secrets from my parents. But I was proud, and I thought that I might fail, and, if I succeeded, I was anxious that my success should burst suddenly upon you, my mother. I am sure that you must rejoice in that success—do you not? Now tell me, are you happy—happy

in the exaltation of your son? Love me, mother, love me very much; for fame is nothing worth, without love."

"Have I not always loved you?" asked my mother.

Alas! I could not answer "Yes!"

CHAPTER II.

THE PALSY-STRICKEN.

“ Tell us,
How parted she from life.”

FORD. .

“ No sleep, was e'er like this—no trance, no fainting !
Those white and rigid lips—those dreadful eye-balls—
All prove that death is here ———,
For every vital thing in the universe,
Is quite unlike it ——.”

HORNE'S *Cosmo de' Medici*.

LEAVING Meadow-bank, I proceeded with a beating heart, towards the cottage in Grass-hill lane. As I went along, many painful misgivings floated, cloud-like, over the serenity of my mind. I thought of the disclosure that I had undertaken to make, and I feared that I was bound upon a perilous adventure. It was not possible to conceive, that a woman, with the strong feelings of Mrs. Moore, could receive the intelligence that I was about to

communicate with any other than over-whelming emotions. To know that the history of her infamy was familiar to me, who for many years had regarded her as a pattern of morality, could not fail of exciting within her a host of painful sensations: but, that her story should be made known unto the world, and that her own daughter should be called upon to pardon the delinquencies of an offending mother; that after long years of obscurity, she should be dragged as a culprit before the world, and all the desolating reminiscences of her past guilt be re-awakened suddenly. Oh! indeed I thought that it would be better for her to die, as she had lived, in her humble seclusion.

I dreaded the disclosure that I was about to make, and I resolved, as long as it was possible, to delay it: It is a fine thing to be able to defer the accomplishment of that which is painful. I thought so, at least, as I went along, thanking God that the time had not arrived for the execution of the plans that had been formed by Sir Reginald Euston and myself. He was to perform his part of the engagement first, and this was a marvellous solace to me. "I will think nothing more of this to-day," I thought: "I will visit them as though I were still abiding in the ignorance of by-gone years."

But, having cast out this fear, another took

possession of my boding mind. Thinking of Ella, it flashed upon my memory that she was no longer a child, and that if Mrs. Moore performed her duty, she would forbid my visits to the cottage. Indeed, the widow-woman, before my departure for the metropolis, had alluded, more than once, to the strange position in which we were situated with regard to one another; and I often marvelled that she had suffered our familiarity to endure so many years. I was no sophist.—I could not persuade myself that, if Mrs. Moore were to say to me, “Mr. Doveton, this ought not to be,” I should be able, with a clear conscience, to answer, “I think that it ought.” I knew that my intentions were honest, but out of the purest soil often spring many evil weeds; and I felt that I was treading a path of danger, more dangerous to my beloved than to myself; for man escapes often, when woman sinks, and these reflexions filled me with painful incertitude. I thought of what Smith had said to me, and I acknowledged that, in part, he was right. But what was I to do? I could not cease to love, but I might abstain from the society of the loved one. It was my duty to do so, and in accordance with the claims of duty, I was now resolute to act. But not duty alone, but love supporting duty, imperatively called upon me to adopt a line of conduct, widely different from what I had

hitherto adopted. I resolved to obey principle, not impulse; to make present enjoyment succumb to ultimate good; to cast out all selfishness from my nature, and, hoping for a happy consummation of my labours, steadily to pursue a predetermined path, and to suffer nothing to tempt me into a digression. "Yes," I said, "it will be wiser, better, kinder, to deny myself for a season. Shall I do ought to injure my Ella? We may be honest, pure, innocent, but there are evil-minded people in the world,—babblers, who will say strange things of us; and they will try to cast a stain upon the spotless character of the cottage maiden, mixing up her name with mine, and pointing at us; this never must be.—‘Pure as snow, and chaste as ice, ye shall not escape calumny.’ ”

Thinking of these things, as I passed along Grass-hill lane, I was aroused from my meditations, by the ringing noise of a horse's hoofs close behind me, striking rapidly upon the hard, frosty ground. I stood still; and saw that the horseman, was no other than the village apothecary. As he passed me, he recognized my person, and uttered a few words, of which I caught only the name of Mrs. Moore, for he did not slacken his pace, and almost instantly he had galloped out of hearing. "What can this be!" I said. "Pray


God that disease has not entered the cottage of the widow-woman."

So I quickened my pace, and in a few minutes I was within sight of the widow-woman's abode. I trembled with all the nervousness of anticipated evil, as I beheld the apothecary's horse tied to the little wicket gate, through which I had so often passed with a heart fluttering with more pleasurable sensations, than those which now vibrated in my soul. What could it be? Was the widow-woman dying? Or, had some frightful visitation come suddenly upon Michael and Ella.

I passed the gate, and at the threshold of the cottage-door, I met a strange woman, whom almost breathless with excitement, I accosted, and asked, "What is the matter?" She looked at me and recognizing my face, for she was a charwoman and had seen me at Meadow-bank, she replied, "Oh! Mr. Doveton—your name was the last word she spoke."

"Good God!" I exclaimed, "you don't mean to tell me that Ella Moore is dead?"

Knowing that there was evil, my imagination had conjured up the extreme of misery, and I had asked this question, though there was no reason why I should have thought that the words of the charwoman related to *her*. I always apprehended the extremes of misery, whenever I knew that there was any evil to be dreaded. I had rarely



any half-fears ; and I always expected my sorrows to come upon me, not singly, but in battalions.

“ You do not mean to tell me that Ella Moore is dead ?” I exclaimed, gaspingly.

“ Oh, no !—not Ella—Mrs. Moore ; but no one is dead, sir.”

“ What is the matter, then ?—quick !—tell me ;—for God’s sake, speak !”

“ Mrs. Moore, sir, is going off in a fit — a palsy fit ; it’s horrid to see her. I don’t think that she would quite know you now, sir ; but she wanted you a little time ago.”

“ Are Michael and Ella with their mother ?”

“ Michael and Ella, sir !—oh, no !—they are both gone away,” replied the woman.

“ *Gone !—Gone where ?* This is dreadful ! I don’t know what it is ; but I’m sure that something horrible has happened. Go, and tell the doctor that I wish to see him ; and ask him whether I may go into the room.”

“ Michael and Ella gone !” I muttered to myself ; “ and the Widow Moore in a palsy fit ! I have come in time to hear fearful tidings.”

The apothecary came out to speak with me.—“ Oh, doctor ! what means all this ?—something horrible !—but tell me the worst ; I can bear it. I can, indeed ; for certainty is better than suspense.”

“ I scarcely know myself,” returned the apothecary.

cary; "there is a mystery here, difficult to fathom. Mrs. Moore has been struck with paralysis, and small chance is there that she will survive the day: the sun will surely set upon a corpse."

"But, her children!" I interrupted eagerly; "her children,—where are they gone?"

"I cannot tell you; I am ignorant as yourself. I was summoned about an hour ago to the poor woman's bed-side, and I have just arrived here, as you know. Neither son nor daughter are in the cottage; but perhaps they know not of their mother's affliction, and are not very far from home."

"I fear that they are, sir; but this woman can tell us; perhaps she knows more than we do.—Here, my good woman; when did they—I mean Michael and Ella Moore,—when did they leave their mother? and how long has Mrs. Moore been ill?"

The woman was startled by the earnestness of my manner, and she did not immediately reply. "Can you not speak?" I said; "can you not tell me what you know? I ask but a simple question; can you not answer me? Where are they gone? where are Michael and Ella Moore gone, my good woman? I speak plainly enough; don't you understand what I say?"

And, at length, the woman replied, falteringly, "I don't know, sir; I do not, indeed."

"But *when* did they go? can you tell me that?"

“ Yes, sir ; they went yesterday.”

“ Together ?”

“ Yes, sir,—together ; and Mrs. Moore sent for me to help her.”

“ And did she tell you nothing ?”

“ No, sir,—nothing. She has been in a sad taking ever since. She has scarcely opened her lips since I have been here, except once or twice, to say, ‘ I wish Gerard Doveton were here.’ ”

“ Doctor, we must solve this : let us go to the widow, and ask her.”

“ Alas !” replied the apothecary, “ she is speechless.”

“ This is dreadful !—we must remain in our suspense. This fearful incertitude will kill me. But suppose, doctor, that we go into her room, and see if we can discover any clue which may possibly guide us in our researches : a letter, perhaps ; or, don’t you think, that, peradventure, Mrs. Moore can write with her hand what she cannot utter with her lips ?”

“ Oh ! no, sir ; she is utterly powerless ; her right side is fearfully distorted by the shock, and there is no hope that she can communicate with us. But you may enter with me ; for, as you suggest, some clue or other might be discovered. But it is my business, you know, to think wholly of my patient ; though I fear that very little can be done for her.”

And saying this, the apothecary led me to the chamber of the palsy-stricken woman. What I beheld there, I will not attempt to describe. Such a wreck, such a hideous distortion, such a miserable ruin of a human face, struck as it were by the lightning of sudden disease, was seldom beheld, even by those who are habituated to horrible sights, and who are familiar with hospitals and lazaret-houses ! In that fearfully distorted visage, no child would have known the face of its mother.

Yet she knew me—I saw at once that she knew me, and she struggled, but impotently, to speak. I heard a low gurgling in her throat—and her mouth, which was drawn awry by the palsy-stroke was opened, but no accents escaped. Her eyes, which protruded redly from their sockets, rolled themselves towards the spot where I stood. Then, as I thought, she made an effort to uplift her hand, but she was powerless—there she lay upon the bed, a wretched mass of the most hopeless impotence.

I knew not what to do. It was plain that the one wish of the dying woman, was to address herself to me. But speechless, and almost motionless, as she was, all means of communication were shut out from her, and alas ! it was too plain, that if she had aught to disclose, her secret must go down with her to the grave.

But my heart died within me, as I thought of this. I turned to the doctor, and said, in accents of despair, "What are we to do?—She has something on her mind, and yet it is utterly impossible that she should unburthen herself."

"Utterly impossible, Mr. Doveton."

"Do you think, doctor, that she can *hear*?"

"Beyond a doubt."

"Then, perhaps, I may lighten her agony;" and bending over the pillow of her bed, I continued in a slow, distinct voice, "Mrs. Moore, have no fear, I beseech you, on account of your children, for I will help them. Here, I promise you, and if I break that promise, may God visit me according to my deserts, that whilst I am suffered to abide in this world, they shall never lack one to help them—they shall never be friendless on the earth."

And the palsy-stricken woman heard me, for she again struggled to articulate; but again were her lips closed, without sending forth any accent more distinct than a low gurgle, which seemed to proceed from the lower cavities of her chest. I knelt down, beside her bed, and repeated my assurances of protection to her children; then I prayed for her poor soul, and my prayers seemed to afford her comfort, for she closed her eyes; and distorted as was her face, I thought that it wore an aspect of calmness.

But, presently her left hand, which lay without the coverlid of the bed, was moved backwards and forwards, and the fore-finger pointed out, as though she were endeavouring to trace something upon the sheet. The apothecary beheld this, and he whispered to me, "I think that she is endeavouring to write with her finger.—Watch;" and we did watch.

"Doctor, what word was that? Did you make out the letters, as she traced them?"

"I think so—that last word was *Lawrence*."

"So I thought, and '*my*'—'*my son*.'"

"Yes—I made that out plainly; but look—"

"Ah! that word was '*Michael*'—and—"

"Ella—'*Michael and Ella*.'"

"Yes—but what was that letter? I cannot make out what she writes."

"I think that the word was '*Paul*'"

"*Paul*!—what can that mean?—but look, doctor; '*Phil—Phillips*.'"

"'*Paul Phillips*.'"

"Yes, I think so—'*knows—knows all*.'"

"*Paul Phillips knows all*. I cannot tell the meaning of this. But look, now the hand is still."

"Oh! doctor, I think that she is dying—see how her frame is convulsed—can you do nothing? She would have written more, but now—— this

is horrible indeed, and those dreadful struggling efforts to articulate. Oh! doctor, what can we do?"

"Nothing, I fear, nothing; the spirit is passing away from her body."

It was indeed—but it passed not away gently, and it was a fearful thing, indeed, to witness the dying struggles of the palsy-stricken woman—the deadly throes, the convulsive paroxysms, the wrenched frame, the rolling eye upturned, the distorted features still more distorted. Oh! better are these things not described.

She died—and where, at this awful moment, were those who should have smoothed her dying pillow, even her own children—where were *they*? Michael and Ella, whither had they betaken themselves? Oh! passing strange seemed their absence to me.

I quitted the death-chamber and entered the little parlour, where I had so often sate listening to the widow, as she read aloud from her easy chair, the sweet moralities of Jeremy Taylor. I did not weep; but my eyes were hot and arid; I would have given the world for the power to shed a tear.

There was an open Bible lying upon the table; I took it into my hand, but I could not read. The letters seemed floating before my eyes, for

my brain was exceeding dizzy. But I prayed—and the stream ‘flowed not from my heart without access of strength.’

I rose up, and I began to look around me, hoping that my eyes would alight upon something which might account for the strange absence of Michael and Ella from their home. I looked around me, but in vain, for all things appeared to be precisely in the situation, in which they were ever wont to have been, ere my departure from Meadow-bank. Despair entered my soul; I knew not what to do in this extremity.

Walking towards the door in utter hopelessness, I dashed my foot against something that was lying upon the ground. It was a book; mechanically I stooped down to lift it up. I knew it well, for it was the *Holy Living*.

I turned over its pages, I know not why, for I did not attempt to read, and a letter fell from the book, at my feet. I picked it up, and looking at the signature, I read the name of Lawrence Moore.

And instantly I accounted for the strange absence of Michael and Ella, from their home. Poor Larry, in sickness and in poverty, destitute and broken down, perhaps dying, had written to his mother for assistance, and Michael and Ella had gone forth to aid him. They had gone to London, for Larry had dated his letter from a

little tavern in the outskirts of the city; they had started, as it appeared, suddenly, and ere this, they had arrived at the metropolis.

I read Larry's letter. It was brief; but it told plainly enough the sad history of his destitution. Utterly without any further resources, after his abandonment of the equestrian players, he had subsisted, for some time, upon his slender professional earnings; but now, not only was he penniless, but fever-stricken; and I almost feared that Michael and Ella would arrive too late to rescue their brother from death.

Taking Larry's letter with me, I quitted the cottage, and turned my footsteps towards the Hall. "And I, too, will set out for London;" I cried aloud, as I ascended the hill. "Yes; ere night-fall, I shall have started upon my journey."

My words were the language of truth. That night I set out for the metropolis.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARMING OF THE KNIGHT-ERRANT.

“ What fairer seal
Shall I require to my authentic mission,
Than this fierce energy—this instinct striving,
Because its nature is to strive ?

• • • • •
Is it for human will
To institute such impulses ; still less
To disregard their promptings ?”

BROWNING.

BUT ere I started upon my journey, I took counsel with Sir Reginald Euston. The good baronet, grieved as he was by the thought of my sudden departure, applauded the generosity of my resolutions. “ Yes, go,” he said ; “ go, Gerard ; and God grant that your expedition may be successful.”

Then we spake of Lady Euston : Sir Reginald had not yet touched upon the subject of her rela-

tionship to the Widow Moore; and although he lamented the catastrophe that had so suddenly cut off the mother of his wife, he could not but feel that, by this dispensation, much bitterness and heart-rending had been spared. "Yet, I must tell her," said the baronet; "I must tell her of what has happened. So long has she been virtually motherless, that the news of this actual death cannot plunge her into very deep affliction. I will see to this, Gerard, and to the matter of the funeral, whilst you go forth to redeem the lost brother of my poor wife."

So I started upon my journey that very night, and on the following evening I had arrived at the metropolis. Taking up my quarters at an hotel, I dispatched a hasty meal; and then, resolute to lose no time ere I set about the accomplishment of my desired object, I took forth Lawrence Moore's letter, and, spreading before me a map of London, I proceeded to acquaint myself minutely with the locality of the street where he was lodging. I had no sooner done this, than it occurred to me that, somewhat indiscreetly, I had taken up my quarters at a house directly in the opposite extremity of the town. Weary of the coach, in which I had been travelling for nearly four-and-twenty hours, I had quitted it at the west-end of Piccadilly, and Lawrence Moore was living in Limehouse.

But I was not much discomforted by this discovery. What were seven or eight miles to me, who had just travelled nearly two hundred? Oh, nothing! I threw my cloak over my shoulders, and was about to sally forth into the open air, when I heard a voice calling to the waiter, the tones of which, as I thought, were familiar to me.

My progress was arrested; I turned round my head, and, presently retracing my steps, I walked to the further extremity of the coffee-room, whence the voice which so struck me had proceeded. "Ha!" I exclaimed, "it may be—it must be—it is Smith!"

And it was actually the man of sense who sat there, regaling himself with a beef-steak and a bottle of Dublin porter.

"Well, Doveton, we are destined to meet in strange places," said John Smith. "From what quarter of the heavens have you just descended in your balloon?"

"Oh! I have given up my aeronautics, as you desired me," said I; "and, instead of a dreamer, I have become an actor."

"An actor!—what, have you taken to the stage? It is just the sort of thing that I should expect from you."

" 'Taken to the stage.'—Yes; I took to the stage last night, and I have come by it all the way from Devonshire."

Smith smiled at my execrable witticism. "But what do you mean by turning actor?" he asked.

"I mean," said I, with an air of self-importance, "that I am leading now a life of action. I am no longer a dreaming boy, but a man, Smith; a man of the world."

"You a man of the world!—No, Doveton; you will never be that, I am sure."

"And why not?" said I, with an appearance of mortification.

"I thought that I was paying you a compliment," returned Smith; "and, instead of this, I find that I have offended you."

"Oh! no; you have not offended me. But tell me your reason for thinking that I shall never be a man of the world."

"Because you have too much heart; too much honesty; too much sincerity. You are all impulse: a man of the world never does anything upon impulse. I do not see why you should aspire to be reputed 'a man of the world.' I would not have you dream away your life; but still I would rather that you should become too visionary, than too worldly. Action, no doubt, is a fine thing: I have often told you to act. But to become a man of the world, is not to act, but to trifle. Now, I'll wager, Doveton, that you have come up to town for some purpose or other that

will utterly set aside your claims to the title which you so much desiderate."

"I am not so sure of that; but I will tell you what has brought me to town." And briefly I narrated the history of Mrs. Moore's death; of her children's departure from home; and of the causes which led to their departure.

"And do you call that acting like a man of the world?" asked Smith.

"I don't know; but I could not well have done otherwise. Michael and Ella have never been in London before, and they will stand in need of very much assistance."

"Are you going to find them out to-night?" asked Smith.

"I was upon the start, when your voice arrested my progress; indeed, I ought not to loiter any longer."

"Shall you walk there?"

"I have no other mode of proceeding."

"Take a cab," interrupted Smith; "for I'll answer for it, that you never find your way there; besides it is nearly seven miles, and after your journey, you must be tired. But stay; the chances are, Doveton, that in these occidental districts—"

"*Occidental districts*—what are they?"

"The west end of London;—but I was going

to tell you, that the cabmen, in these parts, know very little of the regions about Limehouse, and, therefore, you had better drive first to Leadenhall-street, and then take another cab onward."

"Very well."

"But now, tell me, Doveton, have you got any money in your pocket?"

I searched one pocket, then another, then a third, and at length I was compelled to acknowledge, with humiliation, that, but for the interposition of my square friend, I should have set out on my expedition, moneyless.

"How very lucky," I stammered out, "that you should have put me in mind of it. My purse is up-stairs, in my bed room; I remember taking it out of my pocket. Upon my word, I have had a narrow escape. I am always forgetting these things."

"And yet you aspire to be a man of the world. Depend upon it, Doveton, that his purse is the last thing which a man of the world ever forgets."

"I will go up for it, directly; but, in the mean time, I have forgotten to ask what *you* are doing now, in this house?"

"Oh! merely taking a late dinner, before starting by the Mail. I am going down to * * *, the

seat of our school-boy days, on a visit to old Doctor Goodenough."

"Ah! I shall go there some day, for I wish to see Arundel, the painter. How ill we used to treat that man. We mistook his genius for madness, and all his fine things for nonsense. We looked upon him merely as a drawing-master, and did not regard him as a great painter, in the least."

"And you think that he is one?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Perhaps he may be; but I am no judge of the fine arts; I never smeared a sheet of paper in my life."

"Smith, you are a perfect Goth; but I have no time to argue these things with you; I must be off.—Good bye, Smith; I hope that we shall soon meet again."

"So do I—but, it appears, Doveton, that your memory is very little tenacious; for, in spite of my recent warnings, you are, even now, setting forth without your purse."

"So I am.—Was there ever such a thoughtless being? Upon my word, Smith, we never meet together, without your saving me from the commission of some preposterous folly or other. But, I will run up for my purse, directly, and then take a cab to the city."

This I did. It was a miserable evening, in the latter end of December, when I set out in search of Larry Moore. It was not cold; but a small drizzly rain was descending, and the wind was exceeding high. Neither moon nor stars were visible; but in London, the universal gas is always ready to officiate vicariously for the heavenly constellations; and a 'dark night' is a thing never spoken of by the denizens of a lamp-illuminated metropolis. Yet there was something cheerless in the aspect of the city; for few were abroad on that night, but such as were compelled to leave their homes, and every thing was wet, and dirty, and miserable; it was, indeed, a most hope-subduing night.

My feelings are ever wont to harmonize strangely with external nature. When the sun shines brightly, I am full of hope; when the sky is clouded over, I despond. My mind is a species of barometer, and is elevated or depressed by atmospheric agency. A dark, dreary day, when the rain falls unceasingly, and there is a sensible weight in the superincumbent air, makes me a coward. As I rode towards Limehouse, I felt that I had neither hope nor courage; I was in a fearful state of nervous excitement. I saw nothing but danger and difficulty before

me. I magnified trifles into vast impediments, and almost wished that I had never started on the venture.

I threw myself back in the cab, and drawing the curtain before me, I closed my eyes and endeavoured to bring my mind into a state of more favourable serenity; but the more I struggled against the natural tide of my emotions, the more violent did those emotions become. I set before me, in glowing colours, the delights of a complete success; but when I thought of Michael and Ella, so many distracting considerations rose up, and agitated my mind, that I saw nothing but a web of tangled intricacies — difficulty within difficulty, and fear within fear—a tortuous labyrinth of adventure for me to thread. Mrs. Moore, Lady Euston, Mr. Anstruther, Lawrence Moore, and the mysterious Paul Phillips, as yet merely a name in my book of knowledge, presented themselves to my imagination, in strange and ever-varying attitudes, shifting now here, now there, and forming themselves into closely-woven groups, each one wholly different from the last. A painful state of incertitude disquieted me; the little light, which shone through a crevice, only rendered the surrounding darkness more palpable. “Oh! would,” I exclaimed, “that I knew nothing; or, knowing a little, that I might be suffered to know all.”

Unable to calm the troubled waters of my mind by any inward process, I endeavoured to fix my thoughts upon outward things, and to substitute observation for reflection. So I drew back the curtains of the cabriolet, and began earnestly to converse with the driver. I asked him a multitude of strange questions; laughed at his answers; listened to his anecdotes, of which he had many, all of course relating to his profession; until, as I thought, I had thoroughly extracted the aroma of the man's character. At length, as we neared the end of our journey, a sudden thought entered my brain, and I said to my charioteer, "Old boy, do you know any one named Paul Phillips?"

"No," replied the man; "I can't say that I does; and yet there is something in the name which sounds familiar-like, somehow. Let me think a little.—No, sir,—it's no go; and yet I'm sure—but my memory is failing."

"I'll tell you what, then; if you should happen to remember, I will"—but I checked myself suddenly; for having so lately seen Smith, I was more alive to the absurdity of my conduct. "But never mind; there may be five thousand Paul Phillipses in the country," I added.

As Smith had directed me, I quitted my cab in Leadenhall-street, and almost instantly ensconced myself in another. "To Limehouse;" and having

given this order, I again relapsed into my old state of nervousness.

I thought that I was going into an unknown region, amongst a set of strange savages; and I fully expected to meet with insult, if not with actual violence, in these demi-civilized districts. There was something very horrible in the idea of a small public-house, in the neighbourhood of Narrow-street, Limehouse; and my imagination, which was always abundantly fertile, conjured up strange visions of trap-doors, and butchers' knives, and gangs of relentless robbers. I thought that I was about, certainly, to be victimized, and that I should never return to Meadow-bank again. "In these haunts of depravity," I asked myself, "who is safe?" And it was good for me that I thus acted the self-questioner; for I answered, "If I am not safe, then Ella Moore is in deadly peril;" and thinking of this, all selfish fear forsook me suddenly, and a chivalrous desire took possession of my soul in its stead. I almost longed that I might be called upon to display my courage; and I fancied myself a knight-errant, about to rescue an afflicted damsel. I clenched my hand, and I sighed to think that I was swordless; and I turned to my grim-visaged charioteer, exclaiming eagerly, "Drive faster."

"Did you say Narrow-street, sir?"

“ Yes. Do you know the *Boatswain's Whistle*, in Water-lane, near Narrow-street ?”

“ No, sir ; I can't say that I do ; but we'll manage to find out. It be plaguey bad driving in these parts ; the streets are no wider than the pavements in other places ; and as for the lamps, sir, they're as far apart as turnpike-gates on a high road.”

“ Never mind, but drive on ; I'll give you a double fare for your trouble ; only drive quick, for I'm in a hurry to be at the end of my journey.”

“ Yes, your honour ; and many thanks for the double fare. But here we be at the corner of Narrow-street.”

“ Well, drive on.”

“ I can't, sir ; there's something coming down ?”

“ And no room to pass ?”

“ None at all, sir ; it's good luck that I seed it in time, or we should have been into a terrible jam.”

“ Then I will get out ; here is your money ; I doubt not but that I shall discover the way. And now,” I soliloquized, “ now for action,” as I ran up the dimly-lighted street, which so significantly they have nominated *Narrow*.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MISCHANCES OF QUIXOTISM.

“ Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry,
For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye ;
Not like the formal crest of latter days—
• • • • •
I hotly burn to be a Caladore,
A very Red Cross Knight—a stout Leander.”

KEATS.

HAVING leaped from the cabriolet, I ran along the street, seriously bent upon an adventure. My nerves at this moment were unwontedly well strung; I felt that I had strength and courage enough to face a whole legion of fiends, much more a regiment of men, I thought that I was a chivalrous knight-errant setting forth lance in rest to rescue a captive damsel from the bondage of some cruel giant. If I had been backed by

an army of mailed followers I could not have been more valorous than I was, when I ran along Narrow-street, alone, and in a strange place, and utterly un-armed. I had not even so much as a walking-stick in my hand; but I clenched my fist, thought of Ella Moore, and fancied myself a stout hearted hero.

The night was gusty; it rained at intervals, and the street was exceedingly dark. The lamps intended to throw a light upon the obscurity of this narrow thoroughfare, had for the most part been just demolished by a squadron of drunken sailors, so that there was many a pitch-black *hiatus* between the few still existing luminaries, which emitted the smallest possible quantum of light for the benefit of luckless way-farers. But on I went heedless of the darkness, and it was fortunate for me that there were no vehicles passing adown the street, or I should infallibly have run against them, and very probably been altogether demolished.

But instead of this, as I ran up the street I came violently in contact with a moving mass of humanity, and I heard a Babel of tongues addressing me neither in the choicest phraseology, nor in the most blandiloquent intonations. I am not sure that it would answer any very important purpose to write down the *dicta* of these creatures, by courtesy human; let it suffice that

they cursed me heartily for running against them; and wanted to know what I meant by such behaviour.

These fellows, as it appeared to me, though I could very imperfectly perceive them, were a mixture of marine and fresh-water sailors all comfortably intoxicated. I do not precisely know how many there were, but I should imagine about half-a-dozen. They hemmed me in on every side, and pushed me about from one to the other. "None o' my child," cried one of them, the most drunk of the party, as he took me by the nape of the neck and thrust me forward into the arms of his opposite companion, who repeating the same mystic words, sent me back again to him, who first propelled me.

This was intolerable. Was I, Gerard Doveton, a gentleman, an author, and a knight-errant, to be jostled and pushed here and there by a number of drunken sailors? Could I submit to such usage, alone and unarmed though I were? I longed for a sword that I might hew my way through the obstructing crowd of my enemies, and exclaim with the redoubtable soldier-poet Sydney: "*Aut viam inveniam aut faciam.*"

I grew wondrous wroth in this extremity; my dignity had been grievously insulted, and I had wound myself up for an adventure; I thought that now a very favorable opening presented itself,

and so I determined to put my heroic qualities to the proof without further delay.

“ You cowardly poltroons,” I cried aloud in a voice of thunder, “ you dastards, you cravens, I defy you !” and at the same time clenching my retributory fist, I struck the nearest of my opponents with all the vigour I possessed, on the face.

These warlike proceedings on my part had the effect of generating in the breasts of my enemies a servile spirit of imitation, and it was not very long before I was doomed to experience an anguish similar to that which I had inflicted. There is scarcely anything in the world which elicits such a prompt re-payment as a blow. This I found to my cost when I struck the sailor, for I was almost instantly knocked down.

I was not very much hurt ; but there was a vast deal of mud in the street, and the sailors rolled me, with chuckling malignity, into the slush, and there they left me to cool myself ; for my blood was at fever-heat just then.

My enemies, having fully punished me for my aggressions, bustled onward, and as I was rising from the kennel, I heard one of the party say to another something about “ Poll Phillips.”

In a moment I forgot my discomfiture, wrath, vengeance, indignation, all passed away. I stood erect again, and heedless of the punishment that

I had received, and the dirt which enveloped me, I cried out. "Stop, stop, my good friends, I entreat you—I implore you to stop."

But they heeded not my supplications: on the contrary, they rather quickened their pace, and seeing this, I determined to follow them, for I had caught the words, "Poll Phillips," or "Paul Phillips," I knew not which, and I was resolved at all risks to ascertain whether the individual alluded to by Mrs. Moore upon her death-bed, was amongst the drunken party or known to any one of them.

So I ran after them still crying out, "Stop, my good friends, I have something particular to ask you."

"Oh, yes!—I suppose so; but we arn't so *very* fresh," said one of my enemies, as he turned round and beheld me a few paces in his rear.

"Are either of you Paul Phillips?" I asked in a conciliatory voice, panting between every word.

"All of us, and none of us,—but ask the gutter," said he, whom I had stricken in the face, and as he spoke he tripped up my legs, and again I lay sprawling in the mud.

Then they all ran away laughing, and when I regained my legs, they had turned the corner of the street, and were out of sight. I was horribly crest-fallen. I stood still for several minutes not

knowing what to do. I was bruised both in body and in mind. I was all over dirt, and my face was besmeared with blood ; but as the street was almost utterly dark, I consoled myself with the reflexion that there was no witness of my humiliation ; but then how was I to proceed ? My ardour was somewhat moderated, and I no longer imagined myself a hero, but a very ridiculous Quixote, a “knight of the rueful countenance,” indeed, and I began heartily to despise myself.

But what was I to do ? I was almost on the point of beating a retreat, and returning to my quarters westward, without accomplishing my purpose. But pride stepped in and forbade the retreat ; then vanity suggested that I should present a deplorable aspect to my dearly beloved little Ella ; and then—but it must be acknowledged that I was in a very unpleasant predicament ; I did not know the precise situation of the “Boatswain’s Whistle,” and I saw no body in the streets, whom I could ask, and I did not like to go into a house to enquire, because I was all begrimed with dirt, and my face was besmeared with blood, and more than all things in the world hated I always to be laughed at, “Oh ! Gerard Doveton, Gerard Doveton !”—I soliloquized : “why waited you not patiently till the morning ? ”

“But the river must be somewhere in this neighbourhood,” I continued, “I will go thither and

wash my face," so I retraced my steps, and soon found that I was on the very margin of the Thames. I climbed over some railings, and stood upon a sort of wharf, where laying myself down at full length, with my head hanging over the edge of it, I managed to wash my face.

I found the cold water rather grateful to my burning temples; so not content with cleansing the mud from my face, I continued for some minutes to bathe my throbbing brow with the cool element, until I resolved upon a complete immersion of my head, and leaning over, that I might accomplish this feat, I lost my balance, o'er-topped the edge of the wharf, and fell head-long into the water.

I know not by what process I contrived to save myself from drowning, as I never was able to swim a stroke. But so it was, that after a little floundering I found myself again standing upon the wharf, dripping with wet and miserably cold. I shook myself, as a dog does after bathing, tried to wring some of the water from my hair, and then putting on my hat, I walked with brisk steps in the direction of the street I had just quitted.

"Well, after all," I soliloquized, "it is as well to be wet as to be dirty, but what shall I do? shall I turn homewards, or shall I persevere in my undertaking?"

I thought of Ella, and I made answer, "I will—yes I *will*—persevere."

So I walked onward till I came to a house whence I heard many voices proceeding. I looked up; it was evidently a tavern; but it was not the "Boatswain's Whistle."

But I resolved that I would enter and inquire my way to the establishment I was so anxious to reach. So I pushed open the door, and presently I found myself in a room, where it was entirely impossible to see more than a yard before me, so dense was the tobacco-smoke, which filled the apartment.

There was a great noise, and as it appeared to me, more talkers and singers than listeners. Oaths were abundant, blasphemy and obscenity at a premium; I felt an inclination to retreat almost as soon as I had entered the room.

But I summoned courage to call for the landlord; and he came, half drunk. "Will you have the goodness," said I "to acquaint me with the best way to the Boatswain's Whistle?"

The man laughed, and his face assumed an impudently knowing look as he answered. "The way to the *Whistle*—and you ask me the way to the *Whistle*—Ha-ha! to ask the keeper of the *Anchor*, the way to the *Whistle*, that's good."

And suddenly it occurred to me that I was asking the way to one tavern from the proprietor of another and a rival establishment. So I said, "My good, Sir, I am not going to patronize the *Whistle*, far from it, I prefer the *Anchor*, so order me some brandy and water; but the truth is, that I wish to see a person who is living at the *Boatswain's Whistle*, and I don't know the way to the house."

"No, Sir, no gentleman does," replied mine host of the *Anchor* in a more obsequious voice than heretofore. "'Tis not a fit place for a gentleman — low, Sir, very low indeed."

"But let me have my brandy and water, and then tell me the way to the *Whistle*, for low or high, Sir, I must go there to-night."

"Sorry for that, Sir, on your account, as they arn't respectable people there, Sir, at all;" but having brought me the brandy and water, which I paid for immediately, the publican proceeded to acquaint me with the way to poor Larry's abode.

I drank off the brandy and water, for I thought that after my immersion it might have a beneficial effect; and then set out with all possible speed for the locality of the *Boatswain's Whistle*.

I was not long before I had reached the tavern thus designated, and my heart beat quick as I crossed the threshold of the house, which was

very much of a description similar to that which I had just quitted, only, as I thought, somewhat more respectable; I called the landlord, and I asked in hurried accents: "Is there a young man named Moore lodging in your house?"

The landlord shook his head, "Know no body of the name, Sir, at all."

"But is not this the Boatswain's Whistle?"

"Yes; sure enough—but they calls it the *Whistle* for short."

I was in perplexity—"But tell me," I said, "is there not a young man here who has been very ill indeed of late?"

"Yes; poor fellow—I thought he would ha' kicked in the house."

"Is he here now?"

"Yes; but he's getting a little better. The takers won't have him this time, I think."

"And tell me, my friend—have two young people, a brother and sister, come to see the invalid?"

"Yes, Sir—and they be here now."

"Then the sick man's name must be Moore."

"No, Sir, I'm quite sure it isn't."

"What is it then?"

"Lawrence."

"Ah! Lawrence—I know it—'tis Lawrence Moore; can I see him?"

"Yes, Sir, if you please: I will show you the

way to his room. 'Tis not one of the best in the house, but we are going to move him to-morrow—now, Sir,—take care, there are two steps downwards—and now you go up—can you see?”

“Not very well—but I can grope my way—and how many more flights of stairs?”

“Only one, Sir, and then you are at the top of the house—these stairs are none of the widest—gently, Sir, gently, let me go first—That’s it—now this is the door.”

I tapped, and a well-known voice sweetly uttered the words, “Come in.”

It was Ella’s voice:—how my heart beat, and how my hand trembled as I laid it upon the door-latch.

I entered, and there—but I must pause a little ere I tell the reader what I beheld.

CHAPTER V.

THE RAINBOW HUES OF LOVE'S PAINTED WINDOW.

In many ways does the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal.

* * * * *

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame.

COLERIDGE.

THE apartment which I now entered was small and exceedingly low — so low that in some places I was obliged to incline my head as I walked. It was a garret-room, and the ceiling thereof was angular and sloping, or to express it in one word, pyramidal. At the further extremity of the chamber there was a narrow hearth, and a small aperture by way of chimney; upon the hearth, for there was no appearance of any thing re-

sembling a grate, smoked and crackled a few faggots, but very slender was the flame, and very little the warmth that they emitted. The smoke, on the other hand, was abundant, but unwilling to escape up the chimney it had dispersed itself voluminously about the room, and every now and then a gust of wind sent a cloud of it to thicken the obscurity.

A little way from the hearth upon a deal box, was a solitary farthing-rushlight stuck in a black wine-bottle, serving to illuminate the chamber, after a fashion which is generally called "darkness visible;" and in the further corner of the room was a bed or rather a wretched pallet, curtainless, sheetless, pillowless; and there lay poor Larry Moore!

But who were with him? Who tended the suffering youth? Michael and Ella? Nay; I beheld in the room two maidens; and who were they?

The one was Ella; she sate at the foot of the pallet with a book, which she had been reading, in her hand. It was a borrowed one, and I almost fear that it had not been very much read.

It was a Bible — Ella Moore had just been reading the story of the Prodigal.

The other little maiden was younger than Ella, but scarcely less beautiful and graceful. She sate upon the floor by the head of the pallet, and whilst with one arm she supported the head of

the sufferer, with the other she held a little basin, from which he was eating some gruel, when I entered.

She was dressed in a strange fantastic manner—in a scarlet frock trimmed with black, and surmounted by a black velvet boddice. The frock, or rather tunic, was very short, and descended not much lower than her knees; but she wore a pair of white spangled trowsers, with a fringe of tarnished gold bullion, which reached about half way down her legs, and displayed to full advantage a beautifully rounded ankle, encased in a stocking of scarlet silk with large black clocks, corresponding with her gown. On her feet she wore tiny little black velvet slippers; and altogether her appearance was picturesque in the extreme, resembling that of a Spanish *Gitanela*.

I need scarcely tell the reader that this little damsel was no other than the *Sylphide* of Mr. Centaur's troop — the Mademoiselle Beau-pied of the fair.

“Ella — Lawrence! — and I have found you at last! dear Ella, speak to me,” I exclaimed as I walked tremblingly towards the pallet of the invalid.

“Who is that?” asked the sufferer in a feeble voice, which was echoed by little Beau-pied. But Ella had no need to ask such a question—the tones which she heard were familiar to her — she

knew them — instantly she knew them, and she uttered a faint shriek.

“Gerard!” and the Bible fell from her hand. She turned her face towards the door and beheld me. “Gerard!” and she endeavoured to rise, but her limbs trembled; she was without strength, and she sunk again upon the floor.

In a moment I was seated by her side, “Ella, dear Ella!” and I took one of her little hands into mine. “Ella, are you well — very well? Now tell me all about yourself and about Lawrence, and about Michael. But where is Michael, I see him not — Ella, where is your brother?”

“He has gone out to buy something for Larry, he will very speedily return.”

Then I turned my face towards the suffering youth, who scarcely seemed to recognize me through the smoke. “Lawrence, are you better? How feel you? To-morrow you shall be more comfortable,” and then nearing the head of the bed, I took one of his lean hands into mine; and said, “Lawrence, do you know me?”

He started and looked earnestly into my face. “Know you? Oh! yes, Mr. Doveton, it is not so long since we met — I know you, but do you know *me*? Is there any likeness between the creature that I was last October, and the pale, haggard wretch you see me now?”

Indeed there was very little likeness. Poor

Lawrence! his once noble frame now bore the semblance almost of a skeleton. His cheeks were sunken and colourless; his eyes dull and inflamed; his hair, once so thick and clustering, had almost entirely fallen off. There was scarcely a trace of beauty in his face. Oh! indeed, it was a piteous sight to behold such an abject ruin of a structure once so beautiful.

He drew up his shirt-sleeves, and holding out his arm, he said to me, "Look there; you might span it at the thickest part."

I thought that he said this reproachfully. Perhaps he was thinking at the time, that but for my appearance at Croydon Fair, he would still have been in health and affluence, — some thoughts of a similar nature flitted through my brain at that moment.

"Oh! but you will soon be stronger," I said: "to-morrow we will move you into better lodgings; you shall have a medical man to attend you daily, you have no less than four nurses, Lawrence, and we will take such care of you — won't we, Ella? And you shall have all manner of strengthening things until you are quite well again, and a very giant refreshed."

"You are very kind, Mr. Doveton, very kind, indeed, and I know that I am getting better. But I have been very foolish and very wicked, and very ungrateful to my poor mother. I do

not deserve that she should ever love me again — and yet she will, I know that she will, Mr. Doveton. I have caused her a world of agony I am sure, but she will receive the Prodigal back again open-armed, and run out to meet him I am sure.”

I was silent. The memory of Mrs. Moore’s death-bed came upon me with a sickening influence. I could not speak — I sate statue-like by the bed-side, and I almost tried to persuade myself that what I had witnessed at Grass-hill was nothing more than a dream. Could it really be possible that Mrs. Moore was dead? — *Dead!* and her poor children in utter ignorance of this terrible event.

And upon me had devolved the duty — oh! how painful! — of dispersing their ignorance. What was to be done? The truth must be told — but *how?* I was in a fearful state of distraction, and I uttered a deep-drawn sigh.

“Ah! you may well sigh,” said Lawrence, thinking over all that I have done. But you bring tidings, I suppose, of my mother. Have you come from Grass-hill direct?”

A simple affirmative was all that I could articulate.

“And how is my poor mother?”

To this I could make no answer. I trembled all over with nervous excitement. My head drooped, and I was silent.

"What ails you," asked Ella, "are you ill? You shiver as though you were in an ague-fit."

"Just as I do every day of my life," added Lawrence, "but God preserve you, Mr. Doveton, from such wretchedness."

And here little Beau-pied, who sate beside me, lifted up her eyes from the ground, on which they had been fixed ever since my entrance, and said, "I think that you are wet — you seem quite dripping with wet."

"And so I am," I said, rejoicing in the opportunity thus offered to me of changing the subject of our discourse, "and so I am — miserably wet — the fact is — but don't be frightened, Ella, I have had an immersion in the river—a cold bath," and I endeavoured to laugh. "I had a fall, or rather I was hustled into the gutter by a number of drunken men, and, trying to wash my face in the river, some how or other I over-reached myself; but I am not much the worse for the accident — so don't be uneasy, Ella."

"Oh! but I am — you will catch a dangerous cold if you sit in these damp clothes. Oh! do go home and change them, I beseech you."

"Oh! no, Ella, my home is at the other end of the town — at least six miles off from this, and it will take me a long time to go there and back, Ella."

"But you need not come back to-night. Much

better would it be for you to rest — Michael will be home presently, and there are enough of us to wait on Larry."

"Oh! but I have so many questions to ask you — I cannot go home to-night. I doubt not but that Michael can lend me some clothes — besides there is no danger."

"There is — oh! indeed there is — but hark! those are Michael's footsteps; how very glad he will be to see you. Oh! Gerard, you have ever been to us a very present help in trouble."

And here Michael entered the room. Upon first beholding me he started back, as he thought that there was some intruder in the chamber, whom it would be part of his duty to dispel. But presently he recognized the outline of my face, and his surprise was speedily mingled with joy. "What, Gerard! our best of friends—how strange — it cannot be, yet it is — oh! dear Gerard, whence have you come?"

"From Grass-hill."

"I thought that you were at Charlton Abbey. Oh! how secure do I feel that we are now—"

"I have been at Charlton Abbey as you know; but I reached the neighbourhood of Grass-hill on a visit to Sir Reginald, just in time to hear of your departure."

"And you started off to aid us," cried Ella; "oh! good, kind!" but she checked herself sud-

denly, and turning round to Michael, she added. "But all this time, brother, he is sitting in wet clothes — can you not take him to your room and lend him some of your own?"

"Oh! that I can — such as they are," returned Michael, eagerly, "anything is better than catching cold. I will go below for a candle," and Michael quitted the room.

All this time little Beau-pied had been making ready and administering the medicine, which Michael had brought, to the poor invalid. The child seemed timid and constrained; she did not know how to interpret my sudden appearance amongst them. But a day or two before she had been all in all to the suffering youth, and now she was only one of a number — amongst strangers who, kind as they were, seemed to regard her with an eye of suspicion — she was uneasy, and though she slackened not in her attentions, and would resign her office to no one, she set about her accustomed duties with an embarrassed air, scarcely uttering a single word, or venturing to uplift her eyes. She felt that she was an alien — an interloper in this family party, and she seemed to know that she occupied amongst them a very doubtful position. She loved Lawrence Moore with all the fervour of her childish heart; and she would suffer no one to interfere with that which she deemed her right. She had watched beside his bed from

the first hour of his sickness, and were others, who arrived but yesterday, to deprive her of the prerogative, in which she gloried, and to render her subordinate to them? "No, no," she whispered to Lawrence, when Ella and Michael were conversing together at the opposite extremity of the room," let the whole world flock to your bedside, I must still be your head-nurse. I was the first with you, and I will be the last to leave you : none shall turn me out of my place."

And as though she were fearful of her throne being usurped, she had not since the arrival of Michael and Ella, once quitted her old position by the head of the invalid's pallet. There she sate watching his every motion, and every now and then looking furtively at her rivals, as though she were in constant apprehension of some hostile movement upon their part. Although Lawrence had written for them, as she thought, she wished that they had never come. She did not know of what use they were in the sick-chamber, whilst she was present and capable of doing all things for the sufferer. She was jealous of their kindness ; she wished that all the kindness and affection lavished upon Lawrence should emanate from her heart ; and that all the little soothing acts, which mitigated the evils of sickness, should be the work of her hands. Poor little creature ! this

was weakness upon her part, but it proceeded from the strength of her love.

Michael returned with another rush-light, and leading me into a room precisely similar to that which we had just quitted, he assisted me to change my garments, which were indeed saturated with the wet. As we were doing this, we asked one another a multitude of questions ; but very little transpired of which the reader is not already acquainted.

Immediately upon the receipt of Larry's letter, Mrs. Moore had signified her intention of starting herself for London, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Michael and Ella persuaded their mother to abandon such an undertaking. " Oh ! no, let us go together," said both the children in concord — " I will go," cried Ella, as a nurse ; — " And I as her protector," added Michael.

" But you have never yet been to London," said the widow Moore, " and ignorant of its ways, you will lose yourselves in its crowded thoroughfares."

" Oh ! no — no — we shall not lose ourselves," replied Michael, " for Lawrence has told us the name of his street, and surely we shall easily find it."

" Not very easily, Michael ; but simple and inexperienced as you are, you are still not destitute

of wisdom ; but you must have money, for without that you will be able to accomplish nothing. It is fortunate that we have never been so wealthy as we are now ; the money, which we received in that strange manner may be now applied to the best of purposes. Now, indeed, my children, does my mind misgive me, that Larry was not the donor of that money, or, if he was, he has beggared himself in order to enrich his mother."

"Oh! mother," cried Ella Moore, "be sure that it was Mr. Doveton, who sent us that rich gift."

And when Michael had reached this portion of his narrative, he broke off suddenly, and taking me by the hand, said, "Confess, Gerard, that Ella was right — confess, for there's no use denying it — we are so certain — Ella and I — that we have added the gift already to the long list of favours you have conferred on us."

I was silent, and Michael continued, "Ah! Gerard, this silence is ample confession—you need not utter the word."

Then Michael proceeded thus with his story. "We lost no time in preparing for our journey. We put up a few clothes in a bag, and set out immediately for Merryvale, where we had not to tarry long before one of the coaches arrived on its way to London, and there was fortunately accommodation for us both."

"You did not suffer Ella to travel outside in this bitter weather?" I exclaimed.

"She would fain have gone outside," replied Michael, "indeed, she entreated me to let her, because it would be a saving of expense, and there would be more money then left for Larry. But I would not suffer her."

"Right, dear Michael."

"We reached London yesterday morning, and with some little difficulty we contrived to discover the locality of Larry's abode. We entered the house, Ella and I, fully expecting to find our poor brother in utter solitude; guess, therefore, our astonishment at beholding that strange little girl sitting by his bed-side, and nursing him with the tenderest solicitude."

"And what said Lawrence?"

"When our first salutations were over, and Ella and I had satisfied ourselves that our poor brother was no longer in peril, but that there was every prospect of his speedy recovery, Larry said to us, 'I suppose you are astonished at seeing that I have a companion in my misfortunes. I hope that you will both of you be very kind and very grateful to my little nurse, for without her assistance I should have by this time been snug in my grave.' And this is all we know about the little girl, for since our arrival she has sate by his bed-

side unceasingly, and we have never been able to question our brother."

"Do you know who she is?" said I.

"One of the player children, I suppose, by the strange theatrical aspect of her costume. She is a beautiful little creature at all events, and I could almost fall in love with her myself."

"I think," said I, "that she is something better than she seems — she was not born to exhibit in a circus."

Michael's cheeks blushed deep as crimson.—He was thinking of his own lot — and dim reminiscences of a by-gone state began again to disturb his mind.

He was silent for a few moments, and then, as though he were striving to disperse these distracting suspicions, he paced the room once or twice, and then pausing suddenly, he asked me, "How was my mother when you left Grass-hill? You saw her of course before you started."

This was the question above all others which I least desired to have addressed to me, and which I was the least prepared to answer. Dreading the disclosure that I had to make, I resolved to defer it as long as possible, and then to break the melancholy news gradually to poor Michael. But what was I to answer? — I was in a deplorable perplexity; I stooped down to raise something

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from the ground, and pretended not to hear Michael.

This gave me a little time for consideration. "How was my mother, when you left Grass-hill yesterday?" asked Michael a second time.

"What was that you asked, Michael?"

Michael repeated his question a third time.

"I don't know, Michael," said I.

"But surely you saw her before you left."

"No, I did not."

"How very strange!" cried Michael, fully believing in his innocence that I spoke the truth.

"Strange, Michael, what is strange? I only arrived in the neighbourhood on the evening preceeding my departure."

"But without seeing my mother how did you learn Larry's residence — as she alone had the power of informing you?"

I never could stand a cross-examination, and here I was detected in a palpable lie.

The eloquent blood rushed to my face and crimsoned my very forehead. I felt that I must say something, so I stammered out, "How did I learn it? — How did I learn Larry's residence? — I — I — I learnt it from Larry himself — that is to say, I read Larry's letter."

"But where did you read it, Gerard, if not in my mother's cottage. I fear that something evil has happened."

“Where did I read it—I read it—Larry’s letter, I mean—Sir Reginald brought it to me at the hall.”

Now, if I had neither blushed nor stammered this answer might have done very well—but coupled with my crimsoned cheeks and my faltering voice, it was very much like a lying evasion. Few were ever less suspicious than Michael, but now mistrust crept into his heart.

“Oh! Gerard,” he said, in a supplicating voice, “pray forgive me, if my suspicions are causeless; but, indeed, I doubt very much whether that which you have told me is correct. I have terrible apprehensions in my mind that you are concealing some fearful truth. There is something strange in your manner—you blush, and you look not at me when you speak, you stammer and—dear Gerard, if any thing evil has happened, pray tell me that I may know the worst at once.”

I hesitated—but after a while I summoned courage, and said, “Well, then, your mother is poorly.”

“Poorly—nay, Gerard, tell me, is she not *very* ill?”

“Not very—that is to say, she is confined to her bed, but the doctor—”

“Oh! Gerard, you are still concealing the truth—I am sure you have not told me the worst.”

“Well, then, she is very ill — ”

“And what her disease — oh ! Gerard, I will return to Grass-hill to-morrow, if you will attend to poor Larry in my absence — but what is my mother’s disease ?”

“Paralysis.”

“Is she speechless, Gerard — ”

“Yes — ”

“And dying do you think ?”

I was silent. Oh ! tell me, Gerard — tell me the worst at once — if you love me, tell me, the worst — she is dying, or perhaps, she is dead. — Speak, Gerard. Is she dying, or is she dead ?”

I thought that my heart would have burst, as I uttered the word “*Dead.*”

“*Dead !* and you saw her die — then I am a miserable orphan.”

We mingled our tears together, and then we knelt down and prayed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MONSTER-BIRTH OF AN IMPULSE.

O strange and hidden power of sympathy,
That of like fates, though all unknown to each,
Dost make blind instincts, orphan's heart to orphan's
Drawing by dim disquiet.

COLERIDGE.

I have started many strange beasts in my time,
But none less like a man than this before me.

Ibid.

It was a week after my arrival in the metropolis, and it was the day of Mrs. Moore's funeral. Michael had returned to Grass-hill that he might follow the remains of his mother to the grave; whilst I remained in charge of the invalid and his two delicate nurses.

I had removed my friends into comfortable lodgings, situated in a decent part of the town. Lawrence was gradually gaining strength, although the news of his mother's death had occasioned a

temporary relapse — still he was much stouter and stronger, and it was, indeed, pleasant to see the altered aspect of his face. His disease had been chiefly made up of a series of low fevers attended with quotidian ague; and having been fearfully reduced by these repeated attacks it necessarily required much time to restore him to his pristine condition. Never was a sick man more fortunate in his nurses than Lawrence. It would be almost worth one's while to endure sickness voluntarily, if we could be always sure of being tended by the delicate hands of such gentle ministers as Ella and Beau-pied.

I lodged not in the same house with my friends; because in this instance, I was more than usually inclined to humour the conventional prejudices of the world. Ella was now a woman, she was nearly eighteen, and one of the most beautiful young creatures that eye ever beheld. I would not, therefore, dwell beneath the same roof with her, although Lawrence Moore, her natural protector, was one of the party; for the tongue of scandal is ever busy, and I loved Ella too well to subject her by any indiscretion of mine, even to be suspected for a single moment by the most slanderous censor in the world. So I took a lodging in the same street, and the nearness of my domicile enabled me to be constantly in the presence of my friends.

It was a week after my arrival in London, and Lawrence was sitting in a comfortable arm-chair beside a blazing fire. Little Beau-pied sate upon a stool at the invalid's feet, and Ella was preparing at a table some article of mourning apparel.

Ella was very pale, and her eyes were dim with weeping. She had grieved much for her poor mother; the loss, indeed, to her was irreparable.

I sate beside Ella at the table, and was endeavouring to raise her drooping spirits by conversation of a cheerful, though not of a flippant, nature. But Ella refused to be comforted. "It is the day of my mother's funeral," said she.

Then she was silent, and continued her work, large tear-drops all the while coursing down her pale cheeks. But presently she folded up her work, and rising from her seat, she placed it in the drawer of a side-table; then she said to me, "It is the day of my mother's funeral, and it ought to be passed in prayer."

And little Beau-pied, whose lustrous eyes had been fixed intently upon Larry's face, now turned herself round towards Ella, and said, "I don't know how to pray."

"Have you never prayed, my dear?" asked Ella.

"No — never — except once or twice when I prayed Mr. Centaur not to beat me, and then I went down upon my knees."

“Have you never gone down upon your knees to God?” asked Ella, in a voice of kindness.

“No — never,” replied Beau-pied, thoughtfully.

“Do you know the meaning of the word God?” asked Ella.

But here Larry interrupted his sister. “My dear Ella, what is the use of asking the child these questions?”

“That I might teach her what she does not know,” said Ella, “and surely this will be some use.”

“Oh! yes,” cried the little girl, looking up beseechingly into Larry’s face, “pray let her teach me what I do not know; I shall be very glad to be taught.”

And Ella began to teach. How lucid were the explanations of the young preceptress — how beautifully adapted to the comprehension of the simplest, the most uninformed intellect. Little Beau-pied listened to all that was said with wrapt attention, and apparently with delight. The answers, which she returned to Ella’s questions, manifested considerable natural acuteness, but proved at once that she was utterly uneducated. All that was told her seemed new and strange. She was astonished, and at times incredulous, as Ella described in simple terms the wonderful attributes of the Almighty. Her curiosity at the same time was awakened, and she asked Ella a multitude of

questions. At length she said, "I think now that I know who God is, and how we ought to pray to Him."

"Have you ever learned to read?" said I.

"No — never. I have learned to dance, to ride, to sing, and to play a little on the tambourine — but I have never had a book in my hand."

"Shall I teach you to read then?" asked Ella.

"Oh! do, *do*;" and her bright eyes became brighter with earnestness,—"do teach me to read, and I will leave off dancing and riding."

"Nonsense," interrupted Larry, pettishly, "your dancing and singing will find you in bread, which is more than your book-learning ever will."

The little girl cast down her eyes, and the brightness of her face was over-shadowed. "Don't you like me to read, Lawrence," she asked, and the tones of her voice were very sad. "If you don't like it, I will not learn — I will promise never to learn."

"Ponder well what you answer, Larry," said I.

Larry pondered, and answered "Learn."

"Oh! thank you, thank you!" cried the little girl, "and when shall I begin to learn?"

"To-morrow," replied Ella.

The morrow came, and early in the morning the business of instruction was commenced. What a beautiful thing it was to see the Mistress and the Pupil together — both of them so lovely, yet so

different in their loveliness. How striking, too, was the contrast between Ella's simple mourning garb, and the fantastical scarlet dress of her companion. These two young maidens, as they sate there side by side, would, indeed, have made an exquisite picture.

I never was more deeply in love with Ella, than when I beheld her for the first time acting the preceptress to poor little Beau-pied. How I longed to throw my arms around her neck, and to claim her as my beautiful bride.

But instead of this, starting suddenly from my chair, I rushed out of the room without uttering a word. I ran down stairs, along the hall and into the street. Then I called the first cab that I could see, and leaping into it, I said to the driver, "Narrow Street, Limehouse, as quick as ever you can go."

A sudden thought had flashed across my brain. It was this — that since the first day of my arrival in London I had never once thought of Paul Phillips—" *Paul Phillips knows all*,"—such were the last words which Mrs. Moore had traced with her finger on the coverlid of her bed ere she died, and I thought that from Paul Phillips alone there was any chance of my learning the true history of Michael's and Ella's parentage.

Now I was positive that I had heard the name pronounced by one of the drunken sailors, who

had treated me so cruelly on my way to the *Boatswain's Whistle*; and it was not unreasonable to suppose that either at this house or at the *Anchor*, the sailors had contrived to intoxicate themselves. I resolved, therefore, that I would inquire at both of these taverns after the mysterious *Paul Phillips*, and for this purpose I ordered the cabman to drive me into the precincts of Limehouse.

As I went along, another very important probability was suggested by the nature of my reflections. Pondering upon the strange history of the Moores, it occurred to me that by the sudden death of the widow woman, there was a likelihood of some strange facts being elicited; as amongst her papers and properties, there would most probably be some document or other which might throw a partial light upon the obscurity which now enveloped the birth of Michael and Ella. "If it should be so, Michael is there," thought I, "and he will suffer nothing to escape him."

I arrived safely at the *Boatswain's Whistle* this time without any adventure. Having dismissed my cab, I entered the house, and summoned the landlord to my presence. He welcomed me with the utmost obsequiousness, and conducted me to a private room, which he dignified with the title of a *parlour*.

"I came here to ask you," said I, "whether

you know, or have ever heard of one Paul Phillips."

There was a roguish smile upon the man's face, to me altogether unaccountable, as he answered, "Sure enough, sir, I knows the person perfectly well."

"I desire very much then," said I, endeavouring to appear as composed as possible, though in reality I was strangely excited,—“I desire very much then to see the individual, to whom I have alluded. Do you think that the person is to be found?”

“Oh! surely, sir—sure to be found—the house ben't very far from this—I will go myself, sir, if you like.”

“Do—do, my good friend—I have a particular reason for wishing to see this person alone for a few minutes, and I will thank you very much if you can contrive to accomplish my wishes.”

“Oh! nothing more easy,” replied the landlord, “I will go myself; I shall not be long;” and the tavern-keeper quitted the room still smiling, why I knew not, most facetiously.

I walked up and down the sanded parlour in a miserable state of nervous excitement. I thought that I was now upon the point of making a most important discovery—that the mystery which had perplexed me so much was now in a few moments to be cleared away. I thought that in a very

short time I should become the master of that knowledge which for years I had been panting to gain — the mists of doubt dispersed by the broad sunshine of entire conviction. Rapidly before the mirror of my mind passed in succession the forms of Michael, and Ella, and Lawrence, and Mrs. Moore, and Lady Euston, and Mr. Anstruther. Then I beheld them all grouped together — the one with the other inextricably interwoven. There was indeed a most tangled web, but I thought that it would soon be unravelled, "*Paul Phillips knows*," I repeated again and again as I walked up and down the apartment, "He knows all — I am soon to see him — he will tell me, and then *I* shall know all."

I was sure of this. It never occurred to me for a moment that there might be many Paul Phillipses in the world, and that it was very doubtful, indeed, whether I had secured an interview with the right one. But mine was a very sanguine temperament, and small difficulties were easily overleapt.

I heard footsteps approaching the door, and I stood still. I had braced up my nerves for the interview, and I felt that I was now sufficiently collected to cross-examine Paul Phillips with all the dexterity of a practised counsellor. I had determined upon my plan of investigation, and I doubted not but that it would be crowned with

success. I thrust my hand into my pocket, and with the utmost satisfaction I felt the weight of my purse, and congratulated myself on its being well filled. I knew that I should have to make plentiful use of the "oil of palms," and I was prepared for a disbursement. How could I better expend my money, than upon the restoration of Michael and Ella Moore to their true position in society?

I turned my face towards the door in expectation of Paul Phillips's entrance. My heart beat somewhat quickly, but I felt perfectly composed. To be sure, there was no cause for alarm, and yet it was a critical moment. The door was opened, and the landlord entered, conducting a huge — *woman!*

"This, sir, is *Poll Phillips*—your servant, sir," and with an impudent smile upon his face, the rascal was about to close the door and to depart; when I called him back, exclaiming in a towering passion,

"I asked you, sir, for *Paul Phillips* — a man, not a woman — what do you mean? I tell you what, landlord; I've a good mind to chastise you for your impudence — to bring that creature," and I moved towards the door, without finishing the sentence, as I was anxious to beat a retreat.

"I beg your honour's pardon," said the landlord, "I hope no offence, but I thought you said

Poll Phillips — I don't know ever a Paul — may be if you ask the lady, sir, she will tell you whether there be any of her family who carry the name of Paul."

But I was in no wise disposed to ask the lady any questions. I was disappointed, disgusted and ashamed of myself. I felt that I was in a ridiculous position, and all I desired was to escape. The woman began to abuse me for having made a fool of her and of myself at the same time ; so I gave her a peace-offering in the shape of half-a-crown, and paid a similar compliment to the landlord, though I well knew that Poll Phillips' coin would find its way into his treasury. Having done this, I ran out of the house, congratulating myself upon my escape, but lamenting the utter failure of my schemes.

CHAPTER VII.

DARKNESS VISIBLE.

Blest spirit of my parents,
Ye hover o'er me now ! ye shine upon me !
And like a flower that coils forth from a ruin,
I feel and seek the light I cannot see.

COLERIDGE.

Her name — her birth — her home, he never knew ;
And she — his love was all she sought to know.

BULWER'S *Milton*.

“HAVE you had any letters from Michael?” asked Ella, two days after Mrs. Moore's funeral, as I entered their little sitting-room, and inquired after the health of the invalid.

“He promised that he would write,” said Lawrence, “on the evening of the funeral — but he has not.”

“At least not to us,” said Ella, “but, doubtless, you have heard from him, Gerard.”

"I have."

"And what does he say?" inquired Ella, in an earnest tone of voice.

"That Sir Reginald Euston has been marvelously kind to him, and that he is living in Sir Reginald's house."

"I do not wonder at any thing in the way of generosity that Sir Reginald does," said Lawrence. "I shall never forget his kindnesses to me when I was a boy; he was more like a brother to me than any thing else in the world."

And I said within myself, "How little think you, Larry, that he is your brother-in-law."

But Michael's letter contained much food for anxious reflection — much matter that I was unwilling, at this season, to communicate to his brother and sister. He had discovered the history of his supposed mother, and of her relationship to Lady Euston. In an old oaken box, he had found a bundle of letters addressed to Colonel Kirby — they were from his wife, written about a year after marriage, when he was absent on foreign service, and they contained expressions of intense affection, and promises of the most faithful devotion. It would seem that Colonel Kirby, after the fall of his wife, had sent back these letters, intending them as instruments of the keenest reproach, and such they must have been, for Mrs. Moore, with all her frailties, had not a heart of stone; but why she

had preserved them it was difficult to determine ; perhaps she had been prevented from destroying them by a species of superstitious awe, perhaps from certain lingering feelings of affection for her injured husband. However, Michael discovered them in the old chest, recognized the hand-writing of his mother, perused the letters with intense interest, and then carried them to Sir Reginald Euston, who cleared up the little doubt remaining in Michael's mind by a full narrative of the events which I had detailed to him but a few days before.

But this was not all. In the same chest Michael had discovered a rectangular parcel, which wore the likeness of a box, folded round with white paper, whereon were written these words " For Michael and Ella, to be opened in the hour of need," this parcel Michael had opened, and he found that the paper contained a jewel-box.

He broke open the box, and therein he beheld jewels which seemed to his inexperienced eyes to be of surpassing value. There were neck-laces, bracelets, ear-rings, made up of many costly stones, and elaborately worked gold. He examined them ; most of them bore the initials M. C. P. in delicately small characters. What could this mean ? There was likewise a portrait of a young man, set in gold, on the other side of which was braided, beneath a glass, a quantity of brown hair. " I have shown this portrait to Sir Reginald,"

added Michael, "and the characters wherein he traced the sentence, were tottering and almost illegible, like the writing of one palsy-stricken, and he declares that both the outlines and the expression of the face, in an extraordinary degree resemble mine. Whose portrait can this possibly be? It is evidently the likeness of a gentleman; not of one who could ever have served in the army, as a gunner of artillery. Oh! my dear friend, these things have indeed distracted my mind painfully. I look into the future, and I see nothing but doubt, and uncertainty, — shall I ever cease to wander on in darkness? — shall I ever know the history of my birth? I write this with the full conviction, that I am not the son of Sergeant Moore, yet I know not why, for it is not impossible, — I am in a maze, and I fear that I shall never be extricated."

Of all these things Larry knew nothing. He was ignorant of the strange suspicions that had entered the breasts of his brother and sister, — he had never suspected himself of being any other than he seemed to be. Nor had I; for I was certain that he, at least, was the child of Mrs. Moore. But this certainty made it the more imperative upon me to acquaint him with the history of his mother's life and of his relationship to Lady Euston.

I resolved therefore, that I would do this, upon

the first fitting opportunity, when after his restoration to health, I might be enabled to converse with him alone. I wished also to speak to Ella in private, but I knew not how to accomplish this. I was perplexed; for both Lawrence and Ella expected me to show them Michael's letter, and this I deemed it expedient not to do.

But ere I took my leave of them on that day, it occurred to me that there was nothing in the letter, which I had any reason to conceal from Ella, as she was acquainted with Michael's suspicions, and had harboured feelings of a similar nature herself. So when I quitted the room, I whispered her to follow me, and in the passage I gave her the letter. "Show it not to Lawrence," I said.

On the following morning, I received two letters,—one from my uncle Pemberton, and the other from Edwin Anstruther. The former I had visited more than once, since my arrival in the metropolis, and now he wrote, begging me to bring my sick friend, and his two nurses, to the Rectory. This good man had been strangely interested by my account of poor little Beau-pied, and he longed to have the child beneath his roof, that he and Emily might instil into her mind the christian principles, which none had ever attempted to plant there, until Ella set about the task. "Bring them to me," wrote my good uncle, "and we will endeavour to make them happy. I fear

that your friend Lawrence, too much resembles his mother, — but still we may save him, Gerard, and bring the stray sheep again to the shepherd and the flock. Bring them to me, my dear boy, they all of them require a home, and my house, to the fatherless and the motherless, is now, and ever shall be thrown open.”

I took this letter with me to the invalid's lodging, and for the first time I found him alone. Ella was fitting on some clothes which she had been making for poor little Beau-pied. “Well, Larry, you are so much better,” said I, “that I think we might move you into the country.”

“What! to Grass-hill?”

“Not quite so far as that, but to my uncle Pemberton's: he has invited you all to take up your abode in his house.”

“What! Beau-pied, Ella, and all?”

“Yes,” said I. “Well, think about it, Larry; but tell me now, since I have found you alone, all you know about this little Beau-pied.”

A dark cloud gathered upon Larry's brow, as he answered in a tone of impatience, “What is it that you desire to know?”

“Who is she?”

“I wish that I could tell you, — I wish that she had so much knowledge, herself. She is now to me as a little sister, — an adopted sister, — I love

her very dearly, and when she is old enough, I will make her my wife."

"And until then?"

"She shall be to me as a sister. She is now but a little child, innocent as she is ignorant. I found her amongst the players, a dependent thing, an orphan with none to protect her. I pitied her, and more than once I saved her from the whip of the manager,—the manager was strong and cruel."

"I know his strength and his cruelty too well."

"You, Mr. Doveton?"

"Yes, I have felt it—I have made woeful experience both of his cruelty and his strength. Now tell me, Larry, when you left Grass-hill, where did you go to join the players?"

"To Waterton." This was a town about ten miles distant from Merry-vale, upon the high-road to the metropolis.

"That accounts for my not having found you—but we will talk of these matters anon. You say that little Beau-pied is an orphan?"

"To all intents and purposes," replied Larry. "Her reputed mother, who brought her, when she was quite a little child, into the company to play the part of Cupid or Tom Thumb, died about three years ago,—and left her in the charge of Mr. Centaur. The manager found her services indispensa-

ble to the troop, and in consideration of these services, he supported her. I doubt not but that the old ruffian waxed very wroth when he found that we had taken our departure in company, for I imagine that we were the main stays of the concern."

"And does no one know the parentage of the child?"

"No one that I could ever find. They all seemed to think that she was well-born and did not belong to the woman, who died; but they did not concern themselves about other people's affairs, and therefore they asked her no questions. The poor little thing was miserable amongst them, for she lived in a perpetual state of fear and trembling, and she was naturally the most timorous creature I ever beheld in my life. I fought one or two battles for her — I pitied her and she was grateful to me — in time we began to love one another. Your appearance in the booth expedited our flight, but we had already resolved upon departing and seeking occupation elsewhere. I wish, Gerard, that I could put her to school, until she is old enough to be married."

"My uncle Pemberton will take care of her," said I, "and his precepts, combined with the example of my cousin Emily, will not fail, I am sure, to render her very fit for all the duties of a wife."

According to my view of things there was something very noble and generous in Larry's conduct throughout this transaction. Doubtless, my friend Smith would have designated it in the highest degree preposterous and absurd; but I, looking only to the abstract nobility of Larry's motive, and never pausing to reflect for a moment upon the feasibility of his designs, was filled with rapture as I contemplated this beautiful example of magnanimous devotion. My eyes glistened with tears, and my voice faltered, as I took Lawrence by the hand, and said to him, "You are a noble fellow, Larry, and deserve a statue of brass for this act. You will have your reward, depend upon it — depend upon it, you will have your reward."

As I said this, Ella and the little player-girl entered the room together. "Do you think, Ella," said I, "that you could persuade yourself to leave this fine city in a day or two?"

Ella looked at me as though she scarcely comprehended the meaning of my question, and answered, "I shall be delighted to leave the city, but not to leave my brother whilst he is sick."

"But I mean, to leave it *with him*."

"Oh! in that case," cried Ella, her eyes glistening with joy as she spoke, and her whole face wearing an aspect of delight, which it had not worn since the death of her mother, "in that case we cannot leave it too soon."

“What ! do you not like it, Ella ?”

“Oh ! Gerard, how can you ask me ?—does anybody like London ? does anybody dwell in the city who can manage to live in the country ?”

I smiled at the simplicity of Ella's questions, and answered, “Thousands and tens of thousands.”

“I should really have thought,” said Ella, “that none were living here but by compulsion. I should have thought that this great smoky metropolis numbered amongst its inhabitants only those who are called hither by the nature of their avocations. It is quite an enigma to me, Gerard, that any one should live here from choice.”

“But London *has* its advantages too, Ella.”

“It may, but I have not yet found them,” returned Ella, smiling as she spoke ; and then assuming a more serious demeanour, she continued, “I acknowledge, Gerard, that I have been more astonished than anything else by what I have seen in London. The inhabitants of the town, appear to me a totally distinct set of people from those I used to see in the country. I sit at the window sometimes, and I see things which make my heart die within me. I had no idea that people were so wicked.”

“Why, what have you seen, Ella ?”

“I have seen drunken men and *women*, too, Gerard, reeling along the streets. I have heard God's holy name taken in vain by children who can scarcely articulate. I have seen men fighting

with one another, and beating dumb animals unmercifully,—and many other things beside, which have made my flesh creep with disgust. Oh! Gerard, how heartily do I wish that circumstances had never brought me to London! Before, I used to think nobly of my fellows, but now I cannot help pitying and despising them.”

“Nay, Ella, not despising them, I hope.”

“Perhaps, I ought to use another word, something that means the opposite of *admire*. It is wrong to despise anything, I know; Mr. Wordsworth tells us that it is wrong.”

“And who is Mr. Wordsworth?” asked Lawrence.

“A very great poet,” replied Ella, “and he tells us, as well as I can remember,

—— that he who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never tried — that thought with him
Is in its infancy — ”

“I don’t quite agree with that,” remarked Lawrence,—“but tell me, Beau-pied, what do you think about this visit to the country?—a gentleman, Mr. Doveton’s uncle, has been good enough to ask us all to stay with him.”

Little Beau-pied’s head drooped, and she was silent.

“Why, what is the matter, dear?” asked Lawrence.

The little girl lifted up her head, and replied in hurried accents, "Oh! I will go any where with you."

"But you would sooner stay here?" said Lawrence.

"No — no — yet, perhaps, I would; I am a silly little fool, Lawrence, and I scarcely know what I would sooner."

"Nay, nay, but you have some reason — come, speak out, no harm was ever yet done by speaking out."

"Well then," said the little girl, in a faltering voice, and with an embarrassed air, "I will tell you, though I know that it is foolish, and I almost think it is wrong. I like to have you all to myself, and where there are so many people, you will have no time to bestow upon me; besides, I am afraid of strangers, — I am uneasy, when I am with them, and they stare at me and ask me such strange questions, and wonder who I can be; but this is all very foolish I know, and it will be good for you to go into the country."

"You need not be afraid of my uncle Pemberton," said I, "nor of my cousin Emily, I am sure. You will love them as soon as you know them, for they are the kindest people in the world."

"That they must be," cried Ella, "or they would never have invited us; utter strangers and poor children as we are."

“Then, Ella, I am sure that you will consent. My cousin Emily is dying to see you—I prophesy that you will be *such* friends!”

“I shall be delighted.”

“And you, Lawrence—and you little Beau-pied;—then it is all settled; I will take you there to-morrow—and on the next day I set out for Charlton Abbey.”

“For Charlton Abbey?”

“Yes, Ella—yes. Mr. Anstruther has summoned me, and I must go.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PAINTER OF NATURE.

His was the hand — oh ! no, no — not the hand,
The mighty *soul*, that made the canvass breathe,
And gave it power to strike — to charm — to awe,
Nature and Truth his guides.

MS.

THE letter, which I received from Anstruther, was full of entreaties to visit him immediately. He described himself as being ill both in body and in mind ; he said that now, more than ever, he needed the assistance of my companionship, — he had something of importance to communicate to me, and he felt that my presence at Charlton Abbey though only for a few days, would have a most salutary influence upon his mental, and consequently upon his physical, condition. “ I will not keep you prisoner,” he added, “ for many days in

these dreary dungeons — I will emancipate you very shortly, dear Gerard; so do not be afraid to come, thinking that you will never escape. I have something to tell you, that I have not the heart to commit at this moment to paper. I am very wretched indeed without you,—I am solitary, in the very ‘slough of despond,’ and my heart, far away from that which it loves, has nothing to do but to feed upon itself.”

What answer could I return to this letter, but a promise to set off without delay for Charlton Abbey? and such was the answer I returned.

But first of all, on the day following that on which I received poor Anstruther’s letter, I conveyed Larry Moore, and his delicate nurses, to the hospitable dwelling-house of my uncle. Oh! never was anything more beautiful and affecting, than the kindness of my uncle Pemberton, and my cousin Emily. It was enough for that good man to hear of distress, to pity it, and to pity was with him to relieve it. Who was more welcome to partake of the good gifts, which Providence had bestowed upon him, than the orphan—the deserted, the neglected? There could scarcely have been a little group of persons more likely to awaken the sympathies of a truly benevolent heart, than that which I had introduced to my uncle. A sick youth, suffering for the errors, into which he had been led by a truant nature — a very prodigal

indeed, who, when he would have arisen, and gone to his home, found that he was without a home, and without a parent to receive him. Then a young orphan maiden, upon the very verge of womanhood utterly ignorant of the world's ways, pure, simple, innocent, and beautiful — and, lastly, a poor neglected little girl, who knew not the parent-stock from which she sprung, and whose mind no presiding intellect, had ever attempted to exalt from the degradation of its original ignorance, — into whose ears, no words of religious assurance had ever been poured, whose lips had never breathed forth a single prayer to her Maker, — tossed about like a stray weed, upon the surface of the sea of life, with no one to control her, no one to guide her, no one to raise her above the brutes that perish. Could my uncle Pemberton look upon such a group as this, without stretching forth his hand to assist them? To reclaim the wanderer, to be a safe-guard to the innocent, and to nurture the neglected, was his delight; herein did he behold a glorious opportunity of performing these three great duties of a christian, and nobly did he perform them. He reclaimed the wanderer Lawrence, he was a safe-guard to the innocent Ella, and he nurtured the poor neglected little Beau-pied.

I set off for Charlton Abbey, on the following morning, by one of the western coaches. It was

my intention to proceed as far as S—, to sleep there, and then to continue my journey on the following morning. S— was the scene of my school-boy days; and in the town there resided one, whom I had often, since my pupilage had ended, most earnestly desired to see. This person was a Mr. Arundel — and he was a painter.

S— was within a morning's ride of Charlton Abbey — rather less than thirty miles distant; and Mr. Anstruther was to send a saddle-horse to meet me there, that I might ride to his house.

When I arrived at S—, I called upon Arundel; it was about six o'clock, and I found the painter, surrounded by his family, at tea.

Arundel was drawing-master at Dr. Good-enough's school. He was a man of singular genius; but it was the fashion amongst his pupils to think him mad. I had never been one of his pupils, because my parents had never permitted me to receive instructions in this, or in any other, supplementary branch of education, but I had always been one of his admirers, and he had honoured me with the title of his *friend*.

It often happened that some of my school-fellows would exhibit my drawings to Arundel; for rarely a day passed by, without my resorting to the pencil for amusement; and Arundel was always pleased to speak of them, in terms of the most flattering encomium. "Is it not a pity that

Doveton does not *learn*?" said one of his pupils to Arundel one day. "And does he not learn," asked Arundel, "daily? does he not receive lessons from the best of masters—the master who taught me?" "And who was that?" asked the boy wonderingly. "NATURE, you dunce!" returned Arundel.

Perhaps there never was a more intense admirer of Nature; perhaps there never was one who studied it more profoundly and imitated it more successfully than Arundel. Self-educated, he had drudged through no academy, nor followed any particular school. In the heart of a great wood—on the rocky margin of the wind-swept ocean—on the banks of a sinuous river, or in the centre of a vast plain, where some crumbling record of a by-gone age stood out in solitary grandeur against the sky—in such places had he studied—in such places had he learned. He was indeed the painter of nature, and he painted to all time. He was a great-minded man, and he was well content to forego his claims to present popularity; to no clap-trap artifices did he resort—to no vitiated tastes did he truckle—to no unworthy means of forcing himself into notice did Arundel ever once resort. "I will paint nature as I see it out of doors," said Arundel, "not as I see it on the walls of an exhibition room."

It is common with men of genius to be accused of prejudice, and it is said that they are too exclu-

sive in their admiration, often withholding it when it is due, and fixing too high a standard of excellence. Oh ! indeed, it is a fine thing for mediocrity to perk up such a charge as this. A common eye may see beauties in a sign-post, because it cannot discern beauty from deformity ; but it is a hard thing that genius should be condemned for possessing a more refined sense, a more exquisite capacity of discrimination. And thus did poor Arundel suffer ; it was said that he was prejudiced ; and worse than this, that his prejudice was the prejudice of envy. He admired not the works of his successful contemporaries ; he applauded not where others applauded. His criticisms were brief, but they were decisive. “ They do not paint *Nature*,” said Arundel.

He was almost unknown in the world ; he had never basked in the sunshine of patronage, nor was his name in the mouths of men. His pictures seldom travelled very far from the town, wherein they were painted ; and too many of them reposed beneath the roof of his own house. Once indeed a sweet voice came from a far land, praising him — a voice sweeter to the ear, than the applauses of a vast multitude — a voice which shall be spoken of anon — but seldom was Arundel doomed to encounter any fate more cheering than neglect. The proud consciousness of his own merit sustained him, and in the midst of disappointment, he was

not a disappointed man. He was full of faith — “faith abiding the appointed time,” and it cheered him to think that truth and nature must ultimately triumph over fraud and convention. “I shall not live to see the time,” said Arundel, “but what I have done will be valued aright ere the day comes when there shall be no more painting. My works will not die with me; and posterity,” he added unconsciously imitating the fine language of the greatest man that ever lived — “posterity will do me justice, and to her will I bequeath my name.”

In the mean time Arundel was contented to pursue the humble avocation of a drawing-master in the town and neighbourhood of S——. This was what he called his “daily-bread-work;” he enjoyed it not, but he never murmured; he had a wife and a family — they wanted bread, raiment, lodging — so he worked for them. There was nothing in the calling to which he devoted himself in any way humiliating. It was doubtless sufficiently unpleasant to a man of fine genius, and exquisite sensibilities, day after day, to superintend the mincing efforts of finger-cramped young ladies, or the grotesque attempts of rude schoolboys, handling a pencil, as they would a cricket-bat, and outraging poor Nature in a series of revolting caricatures. I well remember that, at Dr. Goodenough’s, the boys were pleased to look upon Arundel, to use their own language, as “capital fun,” and they

were wont cruelly to make him a laughing-stock. They knew his peculiarities, and his prejudices too well, and; therefore, they had little difficulty in making him ridiculous, — they knew how to “set him a-going,” as they called it, and this was their delight. He was an enthusiast, and upon certain subjects, he could not speak with any measure of calmness; so to these “mad subjects,” would they direct the thread of Arundel’s discourse, and when he launched forth, as launch forth he would, in a heady current of impassioned eloquence, accompanying his words with an energy of action, which kept pace with the rapidity of his utterance, his eyes starting from their sockets, the veins of his temples swelling, and the foam whitening his lips, the boys would stand laughing around him, whilst some more impudent urchin than the rest, would dexterously append a “pig-tail,” of white paper to the collar of his coat, or write “Fool,” upon his back, in enormous characters of chalk.

These outbursts of passionate eloquence, laden with truth and beauty as they were, procured Arundel the appellation of a madman. The boys never troubled themselves to listen to what he said; it was enough for them that he talked with an uncommon rapidity, and made very strange faces whilst talking. Certainly it would have been more judicious in the painter if he had not wasted his fine things upon a parcel of mocking

school-boys ; but who that is once mounted on his hobby ever pauses to reflect upon the fitness of his audience ? Besides, he was the least suspicious of men, and when a question, relating to one of his favourite topics, was propounded to him, he always thought, in his innocence, that the inquirer was anxious to elicit information, and, therefore, with singular liberality he imparted whatsoever he possessed. As for myself, I often listened to Arundel, not in a spirit of mockery, but of admiration ; I often conversed with him ; I courted his society ; he was kind to me, and I was grateful. I never suspected him of being mad, but that which was miscalled insanity I regarded, and still regard as *genius*. From his lips proceeded a multitude of fine things — no splendid commonplaces — no cut and dried antithetical epigrams ; but observations almost startlingly original — seeming paradoxes, which when you probed them to their depths, stood the test of rigid inquiry, and were found to be pure, though deep-seated gold. I never ceased to converse with Arundel without feeling that I was richer for the conversation.

I was a great admirer of Arundel's landscapes, and most especially of his etchings, which he dashed off in the fine free style of Rembrandt, and in a manner which none but that great master, *mei quidem sententiâ*, have surpassed. What chiefly struck me, as being super-eminently

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excellent in all Arundel's works, was the management of his light and shadow. I do not think that any English landscape-painter, unless it be Wilson, has equalled him in breadth: there was no meretricious glitter in any of his pictures — no flickering, fire-work effects — no false allurements to catch the eye, and to dazzle the senses of the ignorant. He never sacrificed truth to prettiness, but painted objects as they appear in nature, not as they would appear when illuminated by coloured lamps, or in the vicinity of a chemist's shop. He was a great master of *chiaro oscuro*; he knew it, and knowing it, I am inclined to think he made the possession of this attribute too exclusively the test of a painter's qualifications. He could overlook any imperfections of design, anatomy, perspective, or colouring; but he could not forgive a man for offending in light and shade. This is a common trick of our self-love, and we must not be too harsh upon poor Arundel for encouraging it.

I might fill many more pages with an account of my painter friend and his peculiarities, but as he is not to appear very often upon the stage of my narrative, perhaps, already I have written too much. But I must now introduce him bodily to the reader — I found him, with his family, at tea.

He was about five-and-forty years of age, and he looked like a man of genius. There was a remarkable earnestness in his face; it was not hand-

some, but it was full of expression, thin and very decided in its outlines. His head was massive, like a block of marble, his eyes prominent and restless, his lips full and open — there was a dreamy look about them, such as we oft-times see in the portraits of very imaginative men. “The lips,” saith Shelley, “are the seat of the imagination” — a thin-lipped man is seldom or never a poet.

The painter sate by the fire-side, attired in a loose grey dressing-gown, which enveloped the whole of his spare figure, and opposite sate his wife, with a little child in her arms. How rarely is it that a man of genius meets with sympathy in his wife; but Mrs. Arundel's whole soul was wrapped up in her husband and his pursuits. She was proud of his genius, and with a beautiful perseverance she exerted all her energies to comprehend it. She could feel the beauty of what he wrought, and in process of time she began to analyze her feelings. It was not enough for her to know that she was pleased — she must trace her pleasurable emotions to their source. She did so, and then she became a critic — she not only knew that her husband's pictures were good, but she knew *why* they were good — she was a painter in all but the executive part, and most fit, indeed, to be the wife of a painter. Happy man! he had no cause to grieve over the imperfect sympathies of

them who dwelt with him. He was, as seldom is the case, "a prophet in his own country," a greater man at home than abroad ; and I cannot help thinking that to this circumstance is attributable the absence of all that querulousness, which is so wont to display itself as an unseemly and humiliating appendage to the characters of such as have, or imagine that they have, claims upon the world, which the world is not ready to admit. Oh ! indeed it wears the spirit to be neglected abroad, and to meet with no sympathy at home. Man needs support either on the one side or the other ; but if the world despise him, and his own particular circle make a mock of him, his must be a strong spirit indeed, if in time it is not utterly broken.

The world was unkind to Arundel, and knowing this, I was ever wont to pity him. But when I beheld him in the bosom of his family, I envied the man I had pitied before. I do not think that I ever beheld a finer groupe than the family of the Arundels.

I speak in a moral, but even in a physical, sense, very much indeed was there to be admired. There sate Arundel, on one side of the hearth, surrounded by his own works, which graced the walls in every direction, and opposite to him sate his wife, with their youngest child in her lap—a baby scarce six months old, an unexpected visitor in the house,

but not on that account the less welcome. It was their only girl, and they worshipped it accordingly.

They had four sons — the eldest of whom was studying medicine under the most eminent practitioner in S——. Two of them, fine boys of thirteen and twelve were sitting side by side most lovingly, upon low stools in front of the fire, looking over a volume of prints, and apparently happy as princes. Upon a table near them was the tea-equipage, with preparations for a much more substantial meal than we are wont to see in the houses of the fashionable. A ham, sundry jars of preserves, toast, cakes and bread in abundance were awaiting the discussion of these early diners, and looked to me very far from uninviting. I need not say that I was welcomed most heartily by the painter and his interesting family; and that I sate down to partake of their evening fare with the most pleasurable emotions that can be imagined. Better, oh! much better a homely meal like this than the ostentatious banquets of the great. Of all parades in the world, there is none which I nauseate more thoroughly than the parade of eating.

“You see me here,” said the painter, in tones of natural gaiety, “with all my jewels around my neck. Nay, look not around the walls”—(for I had mistaken his meaning, and I glanced as he spoke, at the pictures which hung around the room)—“but

towards the fire — *there* are my jewels — I speak not of my works, but of my children — not of my own pictures, but of God's."

"Ah! 'Nature's fresh pictures newly done in oil,' as a quaint but fine old writer has expressed it."

"Yes; true — may I ask whose words they are? Bishop Earle's. I am by nature inquisitive, and whenever I hear a quotation I long to be acquainted with the name of the author. You were ever famous for quotations, and often astonished me by your strange powers of memory, especially in the retention of poetry."

"But my memory," said I, "is very exclusive. It will not remember facts — it will have nothing to do with dates — it abjures whatever is *square* and systematic. I can do nothing with it in such cases. I can remember whole pages of poetry, but not three consecutive figures — I break down at arithmetic entirely."

"Oh! that is because the imaginative faculty, like Aaron's rod, swallows up within you all other faculties," returned Arundel. "Are you still as fond of poetry as ever?"

"Yes — but I have a new set of authors."

"I am glad of it — for I think that in your boyhood you got into rather a bad set,—you were dazzled by the false glitter of certain meretricious performances, and mistook that for sterling gold,

which was in reality the flimsiest tinsel. You forsook the natural for the artificial, and were a much devoted disciple of the Rose-and-Bulbul school of poetry—not only admiring, but imitating, what it was safe neither to admire nor to imitate. I can remember how indignant you once were with me, for not being ravished with ‘The Light of the Harem.’ You said that I was prejudiced, and made a point of condemning whatever the world had judged worthy of praise. You don’t think so now, I perceive. Well I’m glad that you have got rid of such desperate company, as the Houris, the Peris, and the Goules.”

“I have become a disciple of Wordsworth’s.”

“Ah! he will teach you to think. The most that your Rose-and-Bulbul friends ever did was to cause certain pleasant vibrations to act upon the tympanum of your ear. It was rhyme without reason altogether—like the nonsense verses which boys make at school.”

“Nay, now you go too far;—but even granting this, is not the effect produced by the melody of such verse at least equal to that of music which is altogether sound?”

“No, Doveton, in this you are palpably wrong. All good music—all music that is worth listening to, has just as much sense as it has sound. You know that we have a musician in the family, of whom we are not a little proud. I think that he

will best overthrow your arguments by sitting down to the piano after tea. I wonder that you are silent, William," he added, addressing his second son, who sate upon a stool at the foot of his father, "whilst Mr. Doveton tells us that music is meaningless, and appeals only to the ear."

"Oh!" replied the boy, blushing, and at the same time smiling as he spoke, "I think that we can convince him to the contrary."

"Convince me by an exemplification of your theory," said I, "and it will delight me to be convinced. Already do I feel that I was wrong." Then turning to Arundel, I continued, "You have a promising musician in your family, and a little artist too, have you not? But where is your youngest son, and what are his qualifications?"

"We expect him home from school every minute," replied Arundel, and he laughed as he added, "little Arthur is something of an universal genius, for he excels in whatever he attempts. He is only eleven years old, yet at school he is first in Latin and in French. I have promised to give him a watch when he brings me home a certificate that he is first in French, Latin, and Greek."

And Arundel had scarcely uttered these words, when the door was thrown open, and a little fair-haired boy, his cheeks rosy with health and exercise, and his eyes glistening with excitement, came bounding into the room, and crying out, in a ring-

ing voice, musical with glee, "The watch, papa! the watch — I have gained the watch — for I'm first in Greek!"

I know not which was most delighted — the father or the child, at this moment. Arundel kissed the little boy — his mother and his brethren did the same, nor could I help following their examples.

I was very much affected — blindingly the tears rushed to my eyes. I longed for a wife and children.

When tea was over, Arundel at my request placed before me a portfolio of drawings. Then he took from another folio an engraving from some designs of Michael Angelo's, and bade his third son Henry to copy it. William was dispatched to the piano; Arthur took a book from one of the shelves, and Arundel himself seized a pencil, and began very assiduously to draw.

The young musician, with a degree of skill which to my unscientific ear seemed extraordinary, played one of Bellini's most elaborate pieces, whilst I looked over the beautiful drawings of his father. "Are you convinced?" said Arundel, when the last note of the music had ceased to vibrate upon my ear.

"Perfectly," said I, "there was a *history* in that music — legible, if I may so speak, as in the pages of a book — and beautiful ear-reading it is."

This was rather an absurd speech, but it was

intelligible, and the young musician was delighted with his success.

Then I rose from my seat to mark the progress of his brother, the little artist. He was copying with great boldness and decision a figure, which appeared to me violently exaggerated. Arundel declared that it was a masterpiece, and began to discourse upon his favourite subject — the all-engrossing *chiaro oscuro*.

“But it is all out of drawing,” said I.

“It is Michael Angelo’s.”

“I can’t help that. It is decidedly out of drawing, and it is as great a fault to outrage nature in the drawing, as in the light and shadow, of a picture. Did you ever see such limbs as these — they are monstrous — the grossest exaggerations I ever beheld in my life — they, indeed, outstep the modesty of nature — the figures are not like men.”

Here little Arthur, who was sitting beside his artist brother, glanced at the picture, and said in tones of mingled archness and diffidence, “I think that I know why —”

We urged the little fellow to speak — he hesitated, hung down his head, blushed, and then outspoke. He was not certain — and yet he thought — that the figures had been painted for a convex ceiling, and now that they were engraved on a flat surface, they necessarily appeared all out of drawing.

“There cannot be a doubt of it,” I exclaimed, delighted with the acuteness of my young friend. “You have divined the true cause of these seeming exaggerations,” and I patted the little fellow on the head. “Now I might have puzzled over this till dooms-day, without getting at the kernel of the nut.”

“Oh !” said the little boy, “it was all accident. If I had been asked I should very likely not have been able to answer. Or at any other time, perhaps, I might have racked my brain for hours without getting at the truth. It seemed to come upon me unawares, and it is nothing so wonderful after all.”

The wonder was, that his father and myself should have been so stupid ; but I thought of the “*aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*,” and then addressing myself to the little artist, I said, “Should you like, my boy, to be a painter by profession ?”

The boy shook his head : and I asked, “What then ?”

“A merchant.”

And Arundel then said to me, “Much as he loves drawing, and fine as is his genius, he always shakes his head, when I mention the art to him as a profession, which, indeed, I only do jestingly, for I love him a great deal too well, to desire that he should follow in my footsteps. He has set his heart upon being a merchant; why I know not,

unless he is anxious to be something, the very antipodes of a painter, and that he thinks by adopting a profession, which there is little prospect of his loving much, there will be less pain in the event of a failure, which is a very sensible view of the case. I encourage him in these notions, for I know right well that there is no greater enemy to a man's peace of mind than ambition, whose inordinate cravings, day or night, will not suffer him to rest. Never suffer that wily serpent to creep into your heart, Doveton—never aspire to be greater than you are. Mine is the language of woeful experience. I have endured, much and manifold have been my struggles—I have carried about a fire in my bosom for years; but now I am calmer, more patient, more wise. I have endeavoured to stifle, or at least to discipline the wild longings of my ever-craving heart, which like the daughters of the horse-leech, is always crying "Give, give." The time was, when day and night I thought and I dreamt of fame—now I do not; I rest satisfied with the knowledge that what I have done has been done well. I have wedded myself to the art, and for her sake I will labour on, seeking no reward—no alien end. It is something to be able to say "I have done nothing unworthily—I have never outraged nature, nor violated truth, nor laid the net of artifice to ensnare the ignorance of the world."—There are

my etchings—look at them well, and tell me whether each one is not a faithful copy of nature. You may have seen things more delicately finished—the gravers of other men may have wrought more minute lines, and produced a more microscopic result; but look at these etchings—now pause here—can you tell me the time of day, which this effect endeavours to represent.”

“Undoubtedly—the sun has just set—it is the twilight of a summer evening—what a beautiful repose there is in the landscape!—how still and peaceful do all things seem!—

Lapped in the quiet of the lulling air.

You fancy that not a leaf is stirring—that there is not a ruffle upon the surface of the clear, pellucid stream, which “wanders at its own sweet will,” between thickly-wooded banks, so that only the noon-day sun can burnish its cool waters. Night, methinks, is coming on apace.—A few faint streaks”—

“Of what Göthe calls ‘far departed light,’” interrupted the painter, “are visible—do you know Göthe’s writings, the ‘myriad-minded’ Göthe, as he is termed?”

“Oh! yes, Werter and Faust—but above all, my beloved Wilhelm Meister.”

“I am thinking,” said the painter, thoughtfully, the energy of his manner suddenly subsiding, and a placid expression of countenance, supplanting

the earnest look which lately pervaded his features, "I am thinking of setting out on a pilgrimage to Weimar, that I may visit the dear old man."

"What! are you such an enthusiastic admirer of his works, that you would—"

"O! no," exclaimed Arundel, "he is an admirer of *my* works. I have read nothing of his, but the "Sorrows of Werter," and two or three letters he has written me."

"Written you!"—

"Yes, it happened that a collection of my etchings, by some accident found their way to Germany, and Göthe became the purchaser of them. He wrote to me, and with the utmost condescension and kindness, did he express his admiration of what I had done, comparing my works with Rembrandt's and requesting me to send him forthwith other specimens of my graphic genius. I am almost ashamed to confess my ignorance, but, in truth, when his first letter reached me, I scarcely knew that there was such a person in the world."

"He is the greatest man in Europe," I exclaimed, "and the first judge of the fine arts in the world."

"Oh! I am so glad to hear you say so,—but here are the letters for you to read. I think that it is sweeter to be praised by such a man, than to be lauded by a million of dullards. Now, are not they the letters of a master-mind? How much is

there expressed in a few sentences, and how strikingly beautiful are the epithets he employs. Each epithet of his conveys more than a sentence by another. I was showing these letters to the bishop the other day, for he also is pleased to admire my humble works,—I was showing them to the bishop, and I said, ‘None but Göthe could have written such letters.’ And the bishop said, ‘I think, Mr. Arundel, that you do not express yourself aright, you mean that none but such a man as Göthe could have written these letters.’ And I answered, ‘But where, my Lord, will you find such a man?’ You will think me a vain coxcomb I am afraid, but praise from a far country, and from such a quarter is very sweet indeed, it compensates for the neglect of the world,—it assures me of what I was at one time beginning to doubt, that I have not set an undue value upon my own powers, that I have not through many years been cherishing a destructive self-delusion. Pardon my vanity—my egotism—I am little accustomed to praise, and when I think of it, I cannot balance my mind—I cannot adjust the scale of thought. But go on; I have two or three more folios, and whilst you are looking over them, William shall play us an epic of Mozart’s.”

And thus pleasantly passed the evening. Music, painting, and poetry (for I had brought with me a copy of Shelley’s *Posthumous Poems*, which I

intended as a present to the painter, and from it I read aloud the famous translation of the witch scene in *Faust*), combined to furnish forth a rich intellectual banquet. Book after book of Arundel's drawings, did I turn over admiringly, but regretfully, for I was compelled by the shortness of the time allowed me, only to glance at what I would have dwelt upon, and studied. I had permission to select from the number any two or three that might happen especially to strike me; and this task of selection was not one of the most easy.

At length, in one of the portfolios which contained almost exclusively a series of views taken in the Pays-Bas, interspersed with a few occasional drawings of costumery, I alighted upon the portrait of a beautiful female, whom both from the style of her features and her dress, I judged to be a young English lady.

I looked at this picture again and again—it was evidently a portrait, not a creation of the painter's brain, and looking at it, my heart beat very quick, and my whole frame thrilled with strange emotion. In sooth it was a beautiful picture, and I could have loved the possessor of such a face. But was this all? No, reader, no — this was *not* all — for the portrait before me was the very image of my own Ella Moore.

My voice faltered very much, and my whole

frame trembled, as I said to the painter, "Arundel, whose picture is that?"

He looked at it, pondered for a few moments, and then replied, "Ah! I remember—I took the sketch of it on board the *Trechshuyt* that plies, or used to ply, between Bruges and Ghent. It was a young English lady I think, and I was struck by her extreme beauty.—It was the most seraph-like face I ever beheld. I am not quite sure that I have caught the expression. I remember that it was very difficult to catch. It is so very long since I did it, that I almost wonder that I should remember it all. But now that I see the picture, all the circumstances connected with it rise up distinctly in my memory — and I recollect very well having drawn it."

"The name?"

"Oh! that I don't remember—is there no name at the back of the picture?"

"None — but how long ago?"

The painter pondered a little, and then made answer, "About twenty years."

"And you don't think that you can remember the name of the lady — I wish that you could — she is perfectly beautiful, and I shall certainly select this to be my own."

"You are welcome to it; and if you will excuse me for a minute, perhaps, I shall be able to tell you the name of the strange lady; as I think that

in my painting-room I have the old book, wherein I made the rough sketch from which this picture was taken. I was obliged to do it, you know, upon the sly, for I had not the pleasure of the lady's acquaintance."

Here Arundel quitted the room, and I was left to await his return in a most unpleasant state of nervous excitement. Again I looked at the picture; it was a breathing likeness of Ella Moore. The hair was differently arranged, and the costume altogether unlike what Ella was accustomed to wear. But still it appeared to me that there was a wondrous likeness between the face of my beloved, and that which was represented in the picture. Perhaps, had Ella been present, I should have found sundry points of dissimilitude, but in her absence I saw none, but in the style of her hair and drapery.

Arundel was not long absent; but it seemed to me that he had been gone an age, when he re-entered the room, and exclaimed, "Well, Doveton, I have succeeded at last."

"And the name?" I said, almost breathless with excitement.

"*Miss Penruddock*," replied Arundel.

"And her Christian names?"

"*Mary Catherine* — I read them, I suppose, upon the lid of a box, or on the cover of a book."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLAMOROUS VOICE OF REMORSE.

‘ In these strange, dread events,
Just Heaven instructs us with an awful voice,
That conscience rules us e’en against our choice.
Our inward monitress to guide or warn,
If listened to, but if repelled with scorn,
At length as dire Remorse she re-appears,
Works in our guilty hopes and selfish fears.

COLERIDGE.

ON the following day, by one o’clock, I had entered the park-gates of Charlton Abbey. I found Anstruther somewhat altered for the worse since I had last seen him, which was only about ten days before. He was thinner and much paler; his voice was more feeble, and his step more unsteady. He had been ill—very ill, he told me, and then he added in a touching voice, which brought the ever-ready tears to my eyes, “ I am fast sinking

into the grave — but after all, what does it matter? Earth has little happiness for me, that I should sorrow to leave it, and in the grave the weary are at rest. And yet, Gerard, often as I have desired to lay myself down and die, at this moment I am anxious to live on, for I am not quite desolate in the world, and knowing that I have at all events one friend, who will shed a tear for me when I am gone, I cannot bear to think of parting from that one friend for ever. Just as I have found something to live for, death, who has held back so long, and refused to come when I called upon him, steps forward and begins to menace me, crying out, ‘Thy hour is at hand!’”

“Oh! but you have a better friend than I am, and you will leave me to go unto Him.”

“What better friend, what other friend, Gerard?”

“He who has said, ‘Come unto me all ye who are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,’ — He who loveth a broken and a contrite heart. — He from whom Death cannot us dissever.”

“True — Gerard, there is no disputing these things, and yet — and yet — faith is weak.”

“You have not doubted —”

“I hardly know — I have doubted in part, and believed in part — I have never doubted His existence, but I have been often tempted to murmur against Him, I have often refused to say when He has stricken me, ‘Thy will be done,’ and in the

stubbornness of my heart I have controverted the inscrutable ways of Providence, until I believed myself an injured man. I have had sore trials, and like the Patriarch Job, I have been tempted to 'curse God and die.'"

"How much better, if you had exclaimed with David, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.'"

"I know it; but to know what is right is not always to do it. Oh! I could have borne much—penury, disease, ignominy—anything but what I have endured. I know *why* it happened; at least I think so; but it is presumptuous to say that we can fathom the inscrutable motives of God. You know, Gerard, that we are told 'to keep ourselves from idols.' Now I had my idols, and I worshipped them—God punished me; He is a great iconoclast. He threw down my idols—he broke them into pieces, and he smote the worshipper, so that he went out from the temple a maimed and mutilated man. I could not kiss the rod, Gerard; I could not even try to do so—from that moment my heart was hardened—I gave myself up wholly to my despair. There was a sort of strange comfort in feeling that I was utterly without hope in the world. I refused to drink the waters of consolation from the only fount, whence I believe they ever spring. I closed my Bible, and I tried to persuade myself, that there was no God in the world; but *that* I

was unable to accomplish. Then I reasoned with God perversely. I questioned the justice of his decrees. I said to him, "Thou gavest me those children; didst thou give them to me, to love or to hate? To love, doubtless to love—then why hast thou smitten me for loving them? Thou gavest me strong affections—thou knowedst that I would doat upon my children—why then didst thou give them to me?—why then didst thou not send the curse—if thou must have cursed—of barrenness upon me? It would have been merciful—yes, God, it would have been merciful; but instead of this, thou hast tempted me—thou hast laid thy nets to ensnare me—and then thou hast punished me, for the evil unto which I was seduced by thyself. O brave justice! But Satan, thou sayest, was the tempter? Did Satan give me my children? Why then, Satan made the world, and to do evil is to serve our Maker—and good is evil, and evil is good. Oh! beautiful craft of the logician!" Thus spake I, Gerard—horrible, most horrible was it not? and yet I never recalled my words, I have never bowed down my head meekly, and prayed to be forgiven for this hideous blasphemy. I have been hardened by long-suffering. I thought that affliction turned us towards God, but me it has turned from him. I once knew a man who was half an infidel. He lost a child, whilst I was dwelling in his house. When the

news was brought to him, for the boy died in a far country, the first thing he did was to send for a Bible. He had not read it save to controvert it for years; yet when he was afflicted, he hurried to it for consolation: it was the only friend that he had in his distresses. But I — I, Gerard, when God smote me, out of revenge as it were, I closed the pages of his Holy Book for ever.”

“No, not for ever; there is yet time. Thou mayest even now exclaim, ‘It is well.’”

“Ah! what was that?” cried Anstruther, starting as though some sudden recollection had just flashed upon his brain: “those three words, I ought to remember them. It was a case somewhat similar to mine.”

“Yes; the Shunamite woman made an idol of her child — God broke the idol to pieces, and yet the woman exclaimed, ‘It is well.’”

“And it was her only one —”

“Yes; her all — but still she said, ‘It is well,’ and God rewarded her for saying so.”

“He restored her child — ah! I remember it all — but I have no ‘Man of God’ to help me.”

“You have not yet said, ‘It is well.’”

“But if I were — this is fool’s talk — the sea cannot give up its dead. But, Gerard, it is meet that I should tell you the purpose for which I summoned you hither — I am dying —”

“Oh! no — no, not that — death is not written

in your face—you are young, and why should *you* die?"

"Because it is God's will. He does it to 'keep me from idols.' The face is often a volume of lies, trust not to it—if you could look into my heart you would see that it is almost wholly worn out. I have had very strange dreams of late, and since you left me I have felt the bitterness of solitude more than ever I have felt it before. I *am* dying—and, therefore, have I sent for you. You have an uncle, whose name is Pemberton."

"Do you know him?"

"Only by your report. Is he not 'a man of God?'"

"He is one of God's children, of a certainty."

"Think you that he is the man I need to assist me in making my peace with God? You know how I have sinned; and in this fearful crisis, death approaching me with giant strides, I feel that I want a spiritual adviser. Do you think that your uncle Pemberton would take up his abode beneath my roof?"

"I fear that it is impossible, dear Edwin. He is rector of a large parish, and I fear that he cannot abandon his flock for the sake of one solitary sheep. But doubtless he would come hither to see you for a few days if you think —"

"No, no—Gerard," interrupted my poor friend, "it was a wild fancy of mine, and now I see the

absurdity of the idea. I do not know your uncle Pemberton, and of my existence he cannot even be aware but — thinking the other day, over all you had told me concerning him, it occurred to me that he was the minister, from whose hands I should like best to receive the cup — the sacramental cup — which for many years my rebellious lips have not pressed. But this was an absurd chimæra, and we will not allude to the subject again. There is no lack of priests in the neighbourhood — I have one of my own, but I don't like him — not that I have ever heard him in the pulpit, but my steward tells me that he is harsh and unforgiving in his doctrines. I am beginning to think seriously upon the subject of religion ; I much fear that I am in a perilous state."

Anstruther spoke in a calm voice — but it was plain that his calmness was artificial. He was struggling, all this time, against the tide of his natural emotions, and the colloquial style, in which he spoke, was evidently a stratagem resorted to for the purpose of keeping in subjection the feelings which were ready to gush forth in a torrent of impetuous eloquence. But Anstruther was no actor. None ever played the hypocrite with less success than my broken-hearted friend. He knew this himself, and more than ever did the consciousness of his utter inability come upon him at this moment. It was in vain to raise the mask to his

face. He knew this, so he dashed it to the ground.

“No — no — it will not do,” he continued, in a choaking voice, whilst the veins of his temples were unnaturally distended, and the muscles of his face seemed convulsed; “it will not do to impose upon you any more — I have a fire burning in my heart night and day — I shall be damned, Gerard — I shall be damned.”

I was appalled by the frantic energy of Anstruther's manner, and the strange words that issued from his lips. I thought that a sudden rush of insanity had overwhelmed his intellect, and that I stood in the presence of a madman. I knew not what to do, but to look into his face. I had not power to utter a word.

“Yes, Gerard, it is utterly in vain to attempt any longer to deceive myself — my soul is in a perilous condition. For years past I have been as it were in the slumber of intoxication, and now that I awake and look around me, I see what a degraded creature I am. The fact is, that turning over a heap of books the other day, I chanced to alight upon a Bible. It fell open, and by accident — no, no — not that, for I plainly see the hand of God in it all — my eye fell upon a certain passage in Job, which, as nearly as I can remember, runs thus: ‘Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out; he is excellent in power and in judg-

ment, and in plenty of justice : *he will not afflict.*' Now when I read this I became very wroth ; an unclean spirit began to tear me, I cast the Bible indignantly away, exclaiming, 'This is utterly false,' and then I threw myself full length upon a sofa in a paroxysm of turbulent emotion.

“When I became a little calmer,” continued Anstruther, “I endeavoured to compose myself to sleep. It is my way, whenever I have been violently excited, to induce sleep as soon as possible, for it is the only means whereby my nerves are ever settled. I did sleep — but *such* a sleep, if I were to live for ever I should not forget the agony of that sleeping. I had a dream — but I cannot tell you what it was — the cold sweat is upon my brow, and my limbs tremble as I think of it ;— ’twas more fearful than the vision which passed before the eyes of Eliphaz the Temanite.— I awoke, and the first thing that I beheld was the Bible, which I had dashed, in my anger, to the ground. That Bible had made a part of my dream—I fled towards the spot where it was lying, as an escaped malefactor flies to the sanctuary. I clutched the book, and I tried to read it, but for awhile I could not, because my brain was dizzy — but at length I read, and the reading made me calmer ; I forgot my dream, but other fears came upon me, yet these fears were not unmingled with hope. When I laid down the book, the memory of my dream

rose up again to haunt me afresh, so I continued to read far into the night, and ere I closed my eyes in slumber, I *prayed*.

“Since that dreadful day, Gerard, I have had the Bible constantly in my hand. There are words of comfort in it, I know; but the more I read the more manifest does it appear, that if ever mortal creature exposed himself by his stubbornness to the just vengeance of the Almighty, I am that stony-hearted sinner. There can be no guilt greater than mine — it has been a life of guilt, not a casual act, — no; nor a multitude of acts. For years past I have been living in a state of rebellion against God, not merely neglecting, but warring with Him. A few tears of repentance, a few heart-issuing prayers, a few holy resolutions cannot wipe out this great sin. No, no — there is no hope for me, I shall be damned, Gerard, I shall be damned.”

The unhappy man here bowed his head, and hiding his face between his hands, groaned aloud with excess of agony, as though his very heart-strings would burst. Remorse had rushed torrent-like upon his soul; and I almost feared that it would overwhelm his intellect.

For some minutes Anstruther moved not his hands from his face, but when he dropped them he gazed wildly around the room, and then said in a scarcely audible voice, “Where is Guido?”

“At Sir Reginald Euston’s.”

“Ah ! I forgot — some one else will do — I want wine.”

I hesitated ; for I feared to give him what he wanted ; but seeing my irresolution, he continued, “You need not be afraid, Gerard — for wine is my common medicine — just ring the bell ; for you will want some yourself — it will do us both no little good, I am certain.”

I did as Anstruther desired me to do — and presently the wine was brought.

“Now, Gerard,” resumed my unhappy companion, when he had poured down three or four large glasses of sherry, and compelled me to follow his example. “Now I will tell you for what purpose I have summoned you, which as yet you very imperfectly know. I am getting weaker and weaker every day, and I fear that, if I postpone much longer setting about the task I have proposed to myself, I shall not have physical energy enough remaining to accomplish my purpose at all. You look wonderingly at me, as though you do not know what I mean. Well, then, I will explain myself, Gerard. You have often seen me in strange moods, for which you have been utterly unable in any rational manner to account. You may have had your conjectures, and it is possible that you may have collected from what has escaped my lips, that in early life I had the misfor-

tune to lose a young wife and three children. Doubtless this appears to you a calamity which no sensitive mind could ever suffer to pass into oblivion ; but still you will hardly suppose that this event, terrible as it was, after the lapse of so many years, could have the effect, when called back to my memory, of exciting me as you have seen me excited. Give me some wine, Gerard — you hear how calmly I speak, and how subdued are all the epithets I employ. But I was saying that you must often have suspected that there was some latent cause for these singular exhibitions of feeling — for instance, you must have thought that my grief would never have been so violent if it had not been mixed up with remorse — you must pretty well know, Gerard, that I have committed some fearful crime, in fact, that I had more to do, than is commonly supposed, with the death of my wife and children. Now I wish you to know the whole truth, and, therefore, have I summoned you, Gerard. You are the only being I love in the world, and the only being who has ever witnessed me in one of my paroxysms of remorse, and, therefore, will I tell you a history, which to none other has ever been revealed. I trust that I shall acquit myself decently — and yet it is a dread confession that I have to make. I well remember that the first time you ever saw me, you were pleased to say something about my

face — you said that it was the face of a good man, or something to that immediate effect—now, Gerard, I have told you once before this morning that the face of man is oft a volume of lies. . I told you this, if I remember aright, on the day which saw the first of our covenant. Now look at me ? Do you see anything in my countenance to tell you that I have been a desperate evil-doer.”

“ Oh ! nothing — ”

“ And yet I am a *murderer* ! ”

“ A murderer ! ”

“ Yes ; listen to my story.”

CHAPTER X.

THE SAD TALE OF THE MAN WHO PROUDLY CLUNG
TO HIS FIRST FAULT, AND WITHERED IN HIS
PRIDE.

My varied life
Drifts by me. I am young, old, happy, sad,
Hoping, desponding, acting, taking rest,
And all at once; that is, those past conditions
Flock back upon me.

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

"GIVE me some more wine —"

"I must begin my narrative, Gerard, with sundry uninteresting family details, that I may enable you fully to comprehend what follows. I am the second son of my father, who was also a second son. My grandfather was a man of considerable property, both personal and real: the bulk of his estates, at his death, descended to his eldest son. My father was one of the partners in a celebrated

Metropolitan Banking-house. Somehow or other he contrived to be made a bankrupt.

“I was then about eleven years old. We had always lived somewhat extravagantly — a town house and a country house—horses, dinner-parties, and private tutors. My father lived up to his income; he had no thought for the morrow, and when ‘the House’ was declared insolvent he was pennyless.

“My uncle was extremely incensed—for he had lent his brother nearly forty thousand pounds only a few months before the affair of his bankruptcy; and he declared that my father was fully aware of the house being insolvent at the time. A dire quarrel ensued, and the brothers were separated for ever.

“My mother had a life-interest in some property, which was worth scarcely three hundred a year; and upon this slender income my parents went into Cornwall to live. We dwelt in a thatched house—a lamentable falling off from the splendid mansions we inhabited before. My mother bore her misfortunes very meekly; but my father was restless and disconsolate. It grieved him to live in a cottage.

“I was then, as I have said, eleven years of age — my brother was two years my senior. We were of very opposite dispositions — he was born to be liked by the many, I to be loved by the few.

To you, who have studied the human heart, methinks this description will be enough. You can easily fill up the blanks.

“ My uncle, who had always been very kind to us, and with whom we had passed many happy days in the *Abbey*, compassionated the condition of my brother and myself. He had only one son; he was very rich; and he could well afford, therefore, to educate us.

“ He did so — he sent us to a large private school, and we always spent our Christmas holidays at Charlton. I forgot to tell you that my uncle was a widower. His only child was educated at home under the watchful eye of a private tutor. He — my cousin, not the tutor — was a proud, domineering fellow, and I almost sacrificed the favour and affection of my uncle, by giving the young bashaw a sound thrashing for his insolence to me one day. My elder brother had more tact than I had, and he was considerably more in favour at Charlton.

“ At school both my brother and myself stood rather high in the rolls of fame. We were both of us very indolent, but there was a vast difference in our indolence. His was positive, mine relative idleness. He would sit at his desk during study-hours, doing nothing, perhaps sleeping all the while, — I would be reading romances, writing poetry, or drawing fantastical devices; but, as

far as regarded the business of the school, we were both of us equally negligent. And yet, somehow or other, we knew our lessons full as well as our compeers. I seldom or never learnt mine, but I made a prodigious quantity of Latin and Greek verses, the fabrication of which supplied me with a knowledge of the languages, which enabled me at any time to translate our common school classics with facility. I do not know how it was, but I could always bring myself to learn any thing in the world, but the ordinary lessons of my class. I studied German and Italian, in my school hours, but if they had been our classics, I should have learnt Greek and Latin in their stead.

“ When my elder brother was about seventeen, my uncle procured him a civil appointment to India, and he was removed from school to the college at Haileybury, which was then only recently established. His removal did not affect me very much, for though we were excellent friends we were altogether in a different set, and we rarely consorted together. I well remember that his dearest friend was my especial enemy, but these things, anomalous as they may appear, are by no means of rare occurrence at school. His removal, I say, did not much affect me; but when I heard of his destination, I was strangely disquieted, and from that day forth I lived in a constant state of fear and trembling, for I expected to be victimized

in like manner myself, and in every letter that was brought to me, I expected to read my death-warrant. My brother was well contented with his lot, but I had an invincible dread of being sent to India, and a presentiment that the climate would kill me. From the hour that my brother was called away from school, my peace of mind, therefore, was gone. I became nervous, and low-spirited; my friends, who knew the cause of my grief, endeavoured to rally me in vain. Oh! many very bitter tears did I shed, when in the dark evenings I walked up and down the school-room, with my arm round the neck of my favorite associate, pouring forth my sorrows into his ear, and dwelling upon my numberless apprehensions. I lived rather more than a year in this state of tremulous suspense; and then the death warrant was signed."

"A writership for you, also—"

"Oh! no, Gerard, nothing half so good—a *cadetship*. 'But,' added my uncle, 'if you work hard at the Military Academy, with your abilities, you ought to procure a commission in the Engineers, which is looked upon as equivalent to a writership.' Now as my mathematical acquirements extended no further than the Rule of Three, and as I had only a few weeks for the extending of my knowledge, previous to my entering the Academy, my prospect of gaining a commission in

the Engineers, which requires as much mathematical knowledge as it does to take a Wrangler's degree at Cambridge, appeared meagre in the extreme. Had it all depended upon classics, I should undoubtedly have been first Engineer; but I had no head for mathematics; my intellect was of the imaginative class; it was without method and squareness; I was certainly never meant for an Engineer.

“ But this did not very much distress me,—for the misery of going to India seemed to admit of no degrees of comparison. There was neither better nor worse in the case. I was destined to end my days beneath the Tropics; that was enough, and it did not matter to me whether I went as a writer, an engineer, or a drummer boy.

“ And so to the Military Academy I went. I must tell you, Gerard, that neither my father nor my mother favoured this scheme for the banishment of their children. To my mother, indeed, it was a sore affliction, and it well nigh broke her affectionate heart. But what could my parents do? They had no provision to make for their sons,—they were without money and without interest. They had nothing to do but to submit.

“ And they did submit—so to the Academy I went. What did I there? I got rid of my morality in an incredibly short space of time. I was somewhat startled—somewhat shocked, at first,

by the debauchery of my fellow-students; but my squeamishness did not endure very long, and I soon became an accomplished profligate.

“To swear, to game, to sing filthy songs, to get drunk, to forge letters, to walk unblushingly into the shops of the pawnbrokers, and many more worse things than these, were looked upon as very gentlemanly accomplishments. I was considered rather a ‘slow man,’ than otherwise, and yet I confess that I did many things at the Academy, of which I shall be ashamed to the end of my days. Here was it that I left off, entirely, the old-fashioned habit of saying my prayers. Here was it that I learnt to drink raw spirits, and to swear that they are spoilt by dilution. Here was it that I first read Tom Paine, and thought Volney a better authority than the Bible.

“I sojourned in this lazar-house of iniquity, during a period of two years, at the end of which time, I received a commission in the Artillery, three or four prizes, and some handsome compliments on my good behaviour, from the chairman of the Court of Directors. Mine was merely comparative goodness—I was only better than the very bad.

“Three months after this, I embarked for Calcutta, having been attached to the Presidency of Bengal. I was then eighteen years of age, tall, and of a manly aspect. I had been provided with

a liberal out-fit, and an ample letter of credit. I believe that I had every thing in the world, which a young man in my situation could desire, but the situation itself was so intolerable, that if a ship had been fitted out expressly for my accommodation, I should not have felt any less reluctance to embark. I wonder that the Company can get a Governor-general, much more a swarm of cadets. The only means of accounting for such a moral phenomenon, as is presented by this unfailing supply of little victims, is by the tender age of the victims themselves, who being sent out as a matter of accommodation to their elders, discover, when it is too late, that they are in the path of the Juggernaut—the Juggernaut of crushing disease.

“I well remember that the parting from my mother was a sad scene — a very sad scene indeed. My father came on board the ship with me; and I bore up very well until I beheld him, after leaving me, throw himself down, full length at the bottom of the boat, and heard him sob like a little child. Then I turned away from the vessel's side, and I hurried into my cabin below. I had no longer any need to struggle against my emotions, they were all gone, for whose sake I had pent up my tears, endeavouring to set an example of fortitude, which I did not feel — they were gone and I was alone in the world, a desolate companionless being. I

thought that I should have died with agony that night.

“I had a great number of books with me on board; they were mostly of my own selection, and consisted almost exclusively of poetry and metaphysics. I studied very closely during the whole voyage and acquired considerable knowledge, though it was not of a very useful nature, being almost entirely theoretical. My mind was by nature speculative and the abstruse speculations of the metaphysician afforded me no little delight. There was a fellow-voyager of mine, I remember, a young man about two years older than myself, who had somewhat of a kindred intellect. We both of us fancied ourselves philosophers; he was the most logical, I the most ideal, of the two. When we differed upon any point, he had the advantage in argument; but when we agreed, I had far more to say, I outstripped him in eloquence; he could only reason, I could illustrate—he went straight forward, visiting only the towns on the high-road, I branching off in every direction, and scouring all the circumjacent country. He reduced all his discoveries to a sort of formula; I expounded my doctrines in a poem.

“Yet in spite of this difference, we assimilated wonderfully, and very pleasant indeed were our communings. We read Berkeley, Reid, Brown,

and Dugald Stewart together. It was whilst studying the *Alciphron* of the former writer that each of us discovered in the other, a leaning towards scepticism. We had hesitated to speak out before, but now our latent infidelity was suffered to manifest itself in its true colours. We were mutually delighted with the discovery we had made, and we became leagued together in infidelity.

“My friend was the most accomplished sceptic of the two, but I very soon contrived to keep pace with him. And then we jogged on merrily together in our crusade against religion. It was my friend’s business to knock down, mine to build up. He was destructive, I creative. He, by the closeness of his reasoning, contrived to prove the fallibility of an old faith ; I by the fertility of my imagination, to substitute a new one in its place. My associate did not trouble himself to examine the soundness of my fabrications ; he was satisfied with the work of demolition. And this was fortunate, for they could not one of them have stood a logical test. But we were both of us well satisfied with what we had done. I cannot help thinking now that I was better off than my companion—I had a faith, though a false one, to which I clung—he had nothing whatever to support him.

“When we landed at Calcutta, I lost sight of

my friend. He was sent to the Upper Provinces, I to the head-quarters of the artillery. I found one or two of my brother officers, who encouraged notions similar to mine ; but as we did not very often meet together, except at the mess-table, we had not many infidel discussions.

“ I could not explain to you, if I were to try, what my religious views were at that time. I do not think that I very well knew. I certainly was not an atheist, and I did not altogether reject the doctrine of the atonement—however it would be utterly useless to discuss these matters now. I read immensely when in India ; and wrote largely for certain literary periodicals. I was temperate in all things, but in study, and was only a *helluo—librorum*.

“ But this intellectual intemperance was perhaps more prejudicial to my health, than any bodily excesses could have been. So it happened that I had scarcely been a year in the country, when I was attacked by a virulent fever, which was succeeded by another, and another ; and at last I was obliged to return home.

“ I sold all my books before embarking, and spent the voyage home in utter idleness. Like Voltaire's trees, I had nothing to do but to grow, and I did grow strong and robust. I scarcely ever read, unless it was an occasional novel, and wrote nothing the whole way home, but one or two

letters to India. However I projected two or three works, and laid in a fair stock of ideas.

“The company is rather liberal to its sick servants, and we had a comfortable military fund ; so that I received almost as much pay at home, as I did in India. My constitution had received a considerable shock, but I was never actually a sufferer, after we had left the Cape of Good Hope ; so that when I arrived in England, I made a determination of enjoying my three years furlough to the full. You must think all this, my dear Gerard, excessively common-place and prosaic. Man’s life is almost always prosaic until he begins to *love*.

“We shall come to that point presently. I passed some portion of my time with my father, and my mother in Cornwall—some with my uncle at Charlton Abbey—and the rest travelling about the country, visiting different friends and relations, or else lodging in the metropolis.

“During this time, I wrote two novels, which were only moderately successful. There was too much *ballast* in them ;—over-loaded with speculative disquisitions, though for the most part these disquisitions were clothed in eloquent language, and interwoven with the interest of the story ; my writings were too heavy and didactic for the excitement-loving taste of the times. Yet they

were flatteringly noticed by the critics, and I had no occasion to be ashamed of my performances.

“For the first year and a half that I remained at home, I endeavoured to live entirely in the present. I shut out the future wholly from my view ; and I never thought about my return to India. When any body mentioned the subject to me, my brow lowered, and my answers were abrupt. I hated to hear any allusion made to the odious place in my presence. I tried to believe that I was never going there again ; but I took no steps to bring about the accomplishment of what I so fondly desired. I was at this time two-and-twenty years of age, and being certainly possessed of considerable talents, had I exerted myself, it is probable that I might have found some means of earning a livelihood in England. But I was inordinately proud, and I would ask no one to assist me. I was at least independent in India — my appointment there was a provision either for life, or for death, and I felt that it would be impossible to settle in England, without demeaning myself, as I thought, by applying for assistance, from some quarter or other. And thus it was that I had been nearly two years at home, and I had done nothing to avert the fate, which I dreaded — my time had nearly expired, and yet I was to the full as resourceless as I was on the first day of my arrival.

“And now that the time for my departure drew near I began to accuse myself, for my bye-gone inactivity, and my heart died within me, when I reflected, that repentance had come too late, and now that there was no hope for me, and nothing to do but to suffer. How much might I have done in these two years, and yet I had done nothing. The books which I had written had failed to procure me a name in the literary world; and this failure resulted from my pride. I had rather delighted in the idea of running counter to the prejudices of the times; and I encouraged a proud consciousness of having resorted to no adventitious aid to further the success of my works. I wrote my books, and then left them to their fate. Their fate, as you may easily guess, was to be little read and rapidly forgotten.

“Another evil, in a worldly view, resulting from my pride, was that it did not suffer me to extend the sphere of my acquaintance. I would not enter into any society, where I did not *know* that my presence was desiderated. I accepted none but very pressing invitations, and I never courted an introduction in my life. I avoided, as I would a leper, a man holding authority, and to know that a person had it in his power to do me a benefit, was a signal for me immediately to shun him. The consequence of these morbid peculiarities, was that the number of my *friends* was very

small. I use the word in its extended sense as the world uses it, for I had two or three dearly beloved friends, who would have laid down their lives to serve me, and in this I was more fortunate than my fellows. Perhaps, few have had more love showered upon them, than I have; but it has not comé from many sources. The love which I have attracted towards me has ever been concentrated and absorbing. This is the only love that I covet; I want not a corner in a heart.

“As I have arrived now at an important point of my history, I will endeavour with the utmost fidelity, to lay bare my soul, as then it was, to your inspection. I have anatomized the one passion of pride — there was another principle within me equally strong — it was *love*.

“At school and subsequently at the Military Academy, I had been remarkable for the strength of my attachments. I was never without ‘the luxury of my one friend,’ but I was frequently compelled by circumstances to vary the object of my affections. A boy was taken from school, or his time had expired at the academy, and thereby I was deprived of my friend. There was then a void in my heart, which it was necessary to my existence to fill up, so I would look about me for a new object to doat upon, and I was never unsuccessful in my search. At this period of my life, my affection was more intense than it was

enduring, and I confess that I rather delighted in change. More than once I have felt my love for a particular object gradually becoming less and less, from no exciting cause — no accountable reason, and the more I have struggled against my erratic propensities, the more rapidly has my affection diminished. It must be remembered that then I was a child — in after-years my passions were as enduring as they were intense.

“ I had often formed very powerful attachments to persons of my own sex ; but I had never been a great admirer of women. Perhaps, it was that I had never been thrown in the way of any very favourable specimens of the other sex ; perhaps, it was — but be the cause what it may, I had formed an exceeding low estimate of the female character, and I had always decided in favour of celibacy. I took no great pleasure in ladies’ society — I never danced if I could possibly avoid it — I eschewed routes and concert-rooms, and made a point of never writing for an album.

“ I cordially hated whatever was artificial, and this it was that made me shun society, and despise with such a hearty good-will, the common herd of ball-room misses. I could not bear to see nature shut out of doors, and convention domesticated in its stead. I was a remarkably keen observer, and I could detect insincerity in a moment. I was never to be deluded by a strata-

gem — I was not to be played upon by the most practised performer. A man of the world is rather a loathsome object ; but a woman of the world is thoroughly revolting. So you see, Gerard, that at this time of my life I was — but give me some more wine — I almost forget what I was saying, and I feel rather exhausted —”

“ You had better not go on — ”

“ Oh ! yes ; I have begun, and so I will finish my story. This wine is a marvellous restorer. Well, Gerard—up to a certain time all the women I had ever seen had sickened me, either with their affectation, their insincerity, or their emptiness. I had never yet seen woman as she ought to be, until I met —

“ But before I come to this, I must tell you that being, like yourself, of an exceedingly poetical temperament, I had fixed in my own mind an ideal standard of female excellence, and whilst I yearned, at the same time I feared, to meet upon earth a creature, who would realize my fancy-wrought dreams. I knew well enough, that if such a being were to cross my path, I should love so intensely, that I must either possess her or die. I knew that my affection for such a creature would become an all-absorbing principle in my breast, and that I should love to my own undoing. I knew ;—but these vain repetitions lengthen out my story to no purpose ; I wish to concentrate, not to

expand, and to be simple, not extravagant in my language. If I begin to *rave* lay your hand upon my arm, dear Gerard.

“I had lived more than two-and-twenty years in the world, before I knew what it was to love. I had once been rather disquieted by certain feelings of affection for a beautiful young married woman, from whose society I derived very considerable pleasure, but as it was unholy to cherish these feelings, I struggled against my passion, and at length ran away from the fair creature who had excited it. Absence cured me in less than a week — so it is certain that I could never have loved her.

“I said, Gerard, that I would lay bare my soul to your view ; this has been but a partial revealing. My story, however, as it proceeds will furnish many additional glimpses of the springs whereby the strange machine has been moved. I think that if I excel in any thing, it is in the anatomy of the human heart — on paper at least, for speaking rapidly as I do now, I exhibit only the most prominent features of my idiosyncrasy. The more refined workings of my soul — the under-current of motive — the more delicate springs of action, are lost sight of, and you see me but in part. Methinks, that if I were to write my autobiography — a psychological autobiography, for mine has been a life of passion,

not of action, it would be an interesting study for the metaphysician. Perhaps, there never was a more extraordinary intermixture of good and evil in the heart of any one man than of mine. — But listen, Gerard; up to this point you have seen me not in a most amiable light. I have exhibited myself thus far, as proud and discontented, sceptical, and unsocial. I was all this — but I had certain redeeming qualities, and they who knew me best loved me most. But I will not dilate upon my virtues — let it suffice that I was not wholly a brute. Think of me as being at that time a creature, whom it would not be very difficult to love in spite of my manifold infirmities, and especially bear in mind that I was endowed with a powerful and penetrating intellect — that I knew well enough how to lead the heart captive, though I had seldom or never put forth my strength — that I could read the heart as I could a book, and, therefore, that I knew, when I desired to please, how to modify my powers of pleasing; and lastly, remember, that I was gifted by nature with a tolerable person, an ever-ready flow of words, a retentive memory, and a lively imagination; — add to these good gifts—and believe me, Gerard, that this last is the crown of them all, for there is nothing which more enchaineth the heart,—I was a creature of the most exquisite sensibility.

"You see now, though imperfectly I confess, the being that I was, when, in my twenty-third year, I went down to a small watering-place on the coast of Sussex, to spend a few weeks with some distant relations. There was a young lady, staying in the house, who was in some way connected by marriage with my relations; she was only on a visit there, as I was — I never shall forget that visit."

"You loved —"

"Yes, Gerard; in this young lady I beheld the realization of all my dreams — the consummation of all my yearnings — the incarnate likeness of the spiritual being, whom I had so long been worshipping in imagination. Visibly before my eyes beheld I *a perfect woman*. I was lost. It was even as I feared it would be. A devouring passion took possession of my soul —"

"And the young lady?"

"She loved me in turn —"

"But her name?"

"MARY PENRUDDOCK —"

"Then it is even as I suspected, and Ella —"

"*What* is as you suspected?"

I was silent — I knew not how to answer; but at length I faltered out, "I will tell you anon."

Anstruther seemed satisfied; he looked at me for a moment — a faint smile of affection lighted

up his wan face. Then he opened his lips, and said, "Gerard, my throat is very dry; give me some more wine."

I obeyed; and in a few moments, thus Anstruther continued his story.

CHAPTER XI.

THE INCARNATION OF THE IDEAL.

I never thought before my death to see
Youth's visions thus made perfect.

• • • • •

She met me stranger upon life's rough way,
And lured me towards sweet death ; as night by day,
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,
Led into light, life, peace.

SHELLEY.

“ I MUST tell you something about Mary Penraddock. She was two years younger than myself, but she looked still younger than that. She was exceedingly beautiful, and moreover hers was precisely the style of beauty I admired. She had blue eyes, and luxuriant yellow hair, and the most beautiful complexion in the world. I will not weary you, Gerard, with an account of her personal charms. We all have our particular notions

of female beauty ; so think, Gerard, of Mary Penruddock, as you would have her be, not as I describe her, because, should it happen that your taste does not sympathize with mine, you will perhaps marvel that I should admire a being, who so little accords with your ideas of perfection. But I forgot—you do coincide with me—I remember now perfectly well.

“I did not think as many do, that personal beauty is essential to love. I could admire beauty, but I think that I could have loved a creature in no wise endowed with it. Do not think therefore that I was captivated by the outward loveliness of Mary Penruddock. I had seen eyes as bright, features as delicate before ; but I had never been moved to love by these visible attractions. No ; no, Gerard, I should have loved her as well, had she been infinitely less beautiful than she was.

Her father was an independent gentleman, residing in the vicinity of London, a justice of the peace, and so forth—a most worthy and benevolent man, who spent his whole time in doing good, both in precept and in practice a Christian. She was his eldest daughter, and she had been almost entirely educated by her mother—a lady of singular piety and varied accomplishments -- one indeed ‘not of the world.’

“And Mary was not educated *for* the world. If she had been, I never should have loved her.

Though they dwelt in a populous neighbourhood her parents saw little society, and were in nowise the slaves of convention. They took no pains, in the bringing up of their children, to render them as artificial as possible—they did not teach the little creatures to talk like parrots, to move like puppets, and to wear a mask all the day long. It was not one of their doctrines that nature is a clown, and truth a barbarian. They did not altogether believe that hypocrisy is the *to πρῶτον* of education, that it is better to seem than to be, and that worldly opinion is more to be listened to than the conscience. They did not teach their little girls, almost from their cradle, to look forward to the day of their ‘coming out’ as the haven, to which all their thoughts are to tend, and for which all their actions are to be a preparation. They did not train up their children to prefer an opera box to a church pew—a play-book to a bible—a singer to a priest—but they brought up their daughters to be women and Christians.

“And Mary Penruddock was well nigh perfect. I could scarcely wish her other than she was. Though herself a devout Christian, she was full of humility and toleration; utterly without *cant*; she never exalted herself, nor indulged in any self-congratulations. Genius she had, and varied acquirements, but she shrunk from displaying what she possessed. Though she had read much, and

was herself a poetess, the most spiteful could not have called her a blue. She was full of sentiment, and yet she was not sentimental. I speak thus paradoxically ; for I doubt not but that you will discern what I mean.

“ She had seen very little of the world, and was quite uncontaminated by its evil influences. She was all nature and freshness, the most artless creature in the universe. She had never been taught to restrain the genuine impulses of an honest heart ; she had never learned to school her emotions, nor knew she at all how to act the part of a player. I loved her for her ingenuousness, her candour, her simplicity. I could read her heart in her face ; I could confide in what issued from her mouth. I knew that her words were not studied, and that she had not taught her features to lie. Never was there a more beautiful mixture of childlike ignorance, and senile wisdom, than I beheld in Mary Penruddock—ignorance of the world and its ways, knowledge of the heart and of its workings. At one moment she would set me a-smiling, by some innocent question, at the next she would set me a-thinking, by some profound remark. She had never been within the walls of a theatre, nor entered the doors of a ball-room. She had not even learned to dance, and yet she was full of grace. I well remember once that she asked me, what people did when they *waltzed*.

“ There was no sameness, nothing wearisome in Mary’s character. She was at one time all playfulness, at another, melancholy and thoughtful. She would laugh and say all manner of absurd things, so that you would think her the blithest spirit in the world; but in a minute the smile would pass away from her face, a cloud would gather upon the serene heaven of her brow, her eyes would be suffused with tears, and her lips be pressed together in silence. And thus she would sit perhaps for an hour, enveloped in a shroud of thought,—‘looking, in idle grief, on her white hands’ until the old mood would return upon her, and then she would rise up and laugh at herself, for being sad, and become as absurd as she was before, and frolicsome as a little fawn in the meadows —‘What a strange compound you must think me,’ she would say, ‘at some moments, so foolish and trivial, and at others so sombre. I have often thought that there must seem a strange inconsistency in my character, and yet I think it is only because I have very sudden and almost unaccountable transitions from joy to sorrow, and from hope to fear. The one, however opposite, seems but the harbinger of the other, and I am always quite certain if I ever feel particularly happy, that this feeling is but a prelude to one of deeper distress.

Chords, which vibrate sweetest measures,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

“ I am inclined to think that the general tone of Mary’s mind was rather desponding than sanguine. Her philosophy was not of a cheerful order. Having gained little or no knowledge of mankind from observation and experience, her opinion of the world had been derived almost wholly from books; and it is too true, that both poets and novellists love to paint the darker side of poor human nature. And so it was that Mary looked upon mankind with an eye of distrust; she dreaded the hollowness and insincerity of the world; without being positively suspicious, she seemed loath to place confidence in men. She confessed that she had never been wronged by any one—but then she had lived out of the world. Perhaps she was not right, but the more she read, and the more she thought upon the subject, the greater appeared her cause for rejoicing that she had not been thrown into the world.

“ I endeavoured to combat Mary’s prejudices, not so much because I differed from her, as because I conceived myself as an individual to be included in this general censure; and I thought that whilst pleading the cause of the world, I should be vindicating my own claims to sincerity. Yet there was something in all this that pleased me, for the more we conversed about men, the more manifest became Mary’s hatred of artificial society, and conventional things. I only differed

from her when she said that there was no sincerity in the world; when she said that there was *little*, I agreed with her. That there was something kindred in our tastes and feelings—something that drew us insensibly together—we knew from the first day of our meeting. Time rendered our sympathies more apparent. We loved the same books, the same qualities, the same places. We both of us had an equal aversion to whatever was *square*, (this was her own word,) common-place and rule-of-threeish. We were both of us poets, and creatures of impulse. She was musical, and I painted—she sang to me, and I paid her with my pictures.

“There is a passage in one of our sweetest modern poets, which beautifully telleth the history of the love which we conceived for one another. Have you ever read Keats’ *Isabella*? If you have, you must needs remember these lines—

Fair Isabel!—poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in love’s eye!

They could not in the self-same mansion dwell,

Without some stir of heart, some malady;

They could not sit at meals but feel how well

It pleased each to be the other by;

They could not sure beneath the same roof sleep,

But to each other dream and nightly weep.

With every morn their love grew tenderer;

With every eve —————

• • • • •

But I forget what follows; you shall read the poem yourself, by-and-bye, and I will proceed with my history.

“ The lady in whose house we were dwelling had a large family of young children, and, being a most exemplary mother, she was of course constantly in the nursery. Her husband, too, though not engaged in business, had sundry avocations which called him abroad, so that Mary and I spent the greater part of each day in the uninterrupted society of one another — no one to watch our motions, no one to listen to our words.

“ Pleasantly, very pleasantly, did our mornings pass, in sweet communion with one another. She would sit upon the sofa working, and I would sit beside her, sometimes conversing upon some favourite topic, in language gushing from the heart, or sometimes reading aloud one of our favorite poets, in a voice at once passionate and subdued. Then only was it that the language of love escaped my lips; but the words, which I uttered, were the words of the poet, not my own. I spoke not in my own person, but I poured forth my own feelings.—I said what I longed to say, what I would have said, had I not felt myself miserably tongue-tied.

“ Poor Mary! she scarcely knew what to make

of my poetical wooings. The passages I selected were of all of a similar tendency, and there was a strange significance in my voice, and in my manner as I read them. Was it by accident that I stumbled on these passages, and was the strangeness of my manner only the result of an imagination excited by fine poetry? or, was it all design? Mary asked herself in vain. It was *not* design, Gerard—when I took up a volume of poetry, I knew not what passages I should read—but, I could not help reading those poems which best harmonized with the tone of my feelings at the time, and it is not strange that my manner should have been most earnest when I read of that which I most felt. I practised no art in my wooing.

“ But this was not all, Gerard. We frequently walked out together, unwatched by the eye of a duenna. Then had we nothing to do but to commune with one another, and very sweet, indeed, were our communings. We spake to one another unreservedly. We revealed our inmost souls to one another. All our long pent-up feelings now gushed forth in a stream of words. Each was to each like the prophet’s rod, which smote the rock and drew forth water. We could comprehend, fully comprehend the secretest workings of one another’s souls. Emotions, which we had long

conceived to be unintelligible to any but ourselves, were now described by the one and immediately understood by the other. There was a bond of sympathy between us. We felt, as we conversed, that we need conceal nothing—not even our most morbid sensibilities. We feared not to behold, on the other's face, a smile of sarcasm, or a look of cold indifference. Heart communed with heart; and we mutually said, 'I have never revealed myself to any as to you?'

"We had both suffered very much from the imperfect sympathies of all around us. How delicious, therefore, was it to meet with a kindred spirit, before whom we could pour ourselves freely when our beings overflowed with emotion. Now did we embody, in words, all our most delicate sensations — feelings which we thought would have been for ever unexpressed, now found their way into language. All our hopes, our fears, our desires, our joys, and our sorrows, were revealed to the other—and what delight in the revealing!

"We were by nature similar. In Mary Penruddock I beheld a feminine incarnation of myself. Do not mistake me, Gerard; she was as far above me in the scale of morality, as the sun is above the moon, and yet elementally we were alike. The fruits were different, but the trees were the same. She had grown in a different soil—she

had been nurtured by other hands — she had been watched more carefully, and tended more assiduously; she had not been exposed to the winds of circumstance and the blights of temptation as *I* had — she was pure, and I was corrupt — she like a river at its source unsullied and untainted, I like the same river when it has passed through many cities, and collected impurity from them all.

“There were some beautiful little sequestered churchyards in the neighbourhood of * * *, and to these spots we delighted to resort. There would we spend hour after hour among the tombs, conning the barbarous poetical attempts of the rustic epitaph-makers. Gerard, when I began to love, I ceased any longer to be a sceptic.

“I know not how it was. Love is a kind of religion; and insensibly it led me to my God. It was no convincing of the reason — no logical process whatever, that accomplished this great change. Religion slid into my heart; it did not enter into my head. I felt, I did not think, that there was a God, a Saviour, and a Heaven; I began to pray; one night after retiring to my chamber, I found myself prostrate before God. I had not knelt for many a year — not since I left school; but now I was praying and weeping. I was praying for Mary Penruddock, and weeping to think of my unworthiness. I began to pray *for* her; after a while I prayed God to make me

worthy of her. On the following morning I spoke to her on the subject of religion; she had never intruded these matters upon me, and I had never broached them before. I asked her about the sacrament; whether she had ever received it; she looked at me wonderingly, and said, that 'she had never missed receiving it since she was confirmed.' I stood abashed in her presence; for I had never received it in my life.

"I acknowledged my transgressions, and promised sincerely to amend. Mary gave me some spiritual advice, and I resolved for her sake to be converted. Mark this, Gerard, I determined to love the Creator, that I might be more acceptable in the eyes of the creature. Yet it was better than not loving Him at all.

"From that time forth I prayed nightly, and always in an agony of tears. I do not know that I wept over my transgressions so much as I wept over my miseries. The fact is, that every day was to me like a long dream of bliss, from which I was doomed to wake upon retiring to my chamber at night, and the re-action which ensued was terrible. I often cried myself well nigh into convulsions to think of my great love for Mary Penruddock, and my little hope that she could ever be mine. When in her sweet society, I enjoyed the delight of the present, and did not suffer myself to be vexed by the apprehensions of the

future ; but when alone — oh ! Gerard, you cannot conceive the agony of my solitary musings.

“ We had dwelt beneath the same roof nearly a fortnight, when Mary came to me one morning, and announced her intention of returning home on the morrow. She had been unwell for the last few days, and she thought it better to go home — she had told Mrs. —, and had written to her mother — she was sorry to depart so suddenly, but on the whole she thought it was best.

“ A crushing weight fell upon my heart as Mary uttered these words ; I felt very sick, and could only falter out, ‘ I will go home with you.’

“ ‘ Oh ! no — you had better not,’ said Mary, my parents will not like it, I am sure.’

“ ‘ But how can I stay after you are gone ?’ said I ; ‘ I shall not have the heart to abide here.’

“ Mary seemed very sorrowful ; she would have liked my escort, but her parents would think it strange, and it would seem so odd to leave * * * so suddenly without any better reason than this, and altogether she thought it would be better for me to wait a day or two, and so I consented to stay.

“ Oh ! Gerard, I never shall forget the exceeding wretchedness of that evening ; I was so miserable that I talked incessantly, and told comical stories for the sole purpose of keeping myself from crying. If I had paused for a moment, I

should have burst into an agony of tears. Mary was too keen an observer not to know that my mirth was artificial—she did not think me so heartless a being as I must have appeared to the rest of our party.

“So Mary went. When the carriage drove off I whistled, hummed a fragment of a tune, and then turning round to my host, I told him that I was going for a ride.

“I walked leisurely down to the livery-stables, selected the best horse I could find,—mounted, and having ridden slowly through the town, I struck out for the South Downs. I had no sooner got upon the turf than I clapped the spurs to the sides of the horse, and urged the animal into a full gallop. I was trying to ride away from my self—to work off my misery by excitement. Quiescence would have killed me outright. Any thing was more desirable than that—any thing more easy to be borne than that dull torpid state of suffering—that dreary stagnation of the heart, which comes upon us when any great joy has departed—any period of sweet excitement is at an end. If I could have rushed into the thick of a battle I should have been happy; it was necessary that I should move, and the more rapid the motion—the more stirring the turmoil, the better. But my horse was too slow for me; an Eclipse could not have kept pace with my desires, and I

had but a sorry hack. Whip and spur were utterly useless. The poor beast was jaded; he laboured on heavily; he was not the animal for *me*.

“So when I had ridden about fifteen miles I struck down again towards the coast, and made, in a straight direction, for Brighton. There I put up my weary beast, procured a fresh horse in its stead; drank off a pint of sherry, and galloped off, at full speed, towards Lewes.

“I was this time gallantly mounted. The horse they had given me was young and impetuous. He needed neither the spur nor the whip; he would fain have run away with me, but he could not, and yet I gave him the rein. What horse could have run away with me then?—what fleetness could have outstripped my desires? Onward we went gloriously, miles and miles of clear down before us. Nothing to stay our progress, no one to watch me as I went—oh! Gerard, the delirium of that ride!

“The air was fresh, for it was early spring, and we were on the summit of a chain of hills. I uncovered my head, and shouted with the wild energy of a bedlamite. I was in a whirlpool of rapturous excitement. I uttered strange ejaculations, and flourished my whip aloft like a battle-axe. The tears streamed in torrents down my face, but I knew not the source whence they came.

I was intensely miserable, and yet I was intensely happy. I was mad — positively mad — there was no coercive power in my mind. I believe that if I had come to the brink of a precipice I should not have reined in my steed.

“ At length I felt that I was choaking—I could not give free vent to my tears, and the strong tide of emotion was strangling me. Scarcely knowing what I did, I pulled up my horse with a jerk which nearly threw him back upon his haunches. I dismounted, and walking by the side of my beast, whom fear had made passive as a lamb, I wept long and uncontrolledly until I had expended all my tears ; and then I again leapt into the saddle — again I applied the spur and flourished the whip — again I flew along the downs, shouting. Before me I beheld a long line of posts, and some strange little buildings, like pigeon-houses. I was approaching a race-course ; this gladdened me, for I knew that the riding would be good. On I went ; there was a chain across the entrance to the course ; I rode at it, my animal cleared it — another, he cleared that too — a third, and both the horse and the rider were dashed with headlong violence to the earth.

“ I scarcely know the precise nature of our evolutions. The hind legs of my horse had been entangled in the chains, and his head had come in violent contact with the earth ; I could see this

plainly enough ; for when I rose up, which I did almost instantly, the poor animal stood beside me, trembling all over like an aspen leaf, and a large lump of turf was clinging to his forehead and his fore-lock. As for myself, I was too much excited to feel hurt; I had fallen flat upon my face, and I imagine that the horse had rolled over me; but the turf was soft, and my bones were young — had I fallen on the hard road I must have been killed. None but a madman, Gerard, would have ridden a hired hack at these chains.

“But I *was* mad—and in less than a minute I was again upon the horse’s back, and riding furiously towards Brighton. I remember having pulled up by the side of a pond to wash my face, which was covered with mud, and to brush some of the dirt off my garments. When I entered Brighton, it was about four o’clock, and the fashionables were taking their exercise. I mingled in the gay throng of carriages, and equestrians; and cantered backwards and forwards on the mall, with the air of a spruce cavalier, thinking that all the people were looking at me. But I was soon tired of this sober occupation, so I returned to the livery stables, reclaimed the horse I had left there, and then galloped back to * * *.

“I had ridden between fifty and sixty miles, but I was not in the smallest degree weary. However, I was prodigiously hungry, (for I had tasted no

food all that day) and I remember that I dined off beef-stakes. After dinner I took a warm bath, and next morning I felt not the slightest inconvenience either from my ride, or my fall. One of my eyes was considerably blackened, but it gave me no pain, so it mattered not — I was too wretched, to be annoyed by such trifles. There is one advantage in a great sorrow—it swallows up all the lesser ones.

“The following day was the Sabbath. I was intensely miserable. I went to church, but I could not pray — I could do nothing but poetize. There was a sort of melancholy pleasure in working my sorrows into verse. I made stanza after stanza, expressive of my utter desolation. I compared myself, one after another, to all the most forlorn things in the universe—

A sea without a shore,
A world without a sun,
A weary pilgrim fainting,
Ere his pilgrimage is done ;

A lone tree, lightning-riven,
Upon a barren plain ;
A helmless bark storm-driven
Across a shoreless main ;

A chalice without wine,
A fount that is dried up,
A palsied hand, too feeble
To raise the water-cup ;

A harp, whose strings are broken,
A bird without its mate,
A famine-wasted captive,
Lorn and disconsolate ;

A poor old childless beggar,
'Reft of his " one ewe lamb —"
Oh ! none of these were ever
So lonely as I am —

" And in this manner, Gerard, did I pour forth my miseries—I could do nothing else all that day. How bare and desolate seemed the house without Mary Penruddock !

" You may think all this very exaggerated, and ask me why I was so wretched. I will tell you, Gerard. I never expected to see Mary Penruddock again. She had gone home to her parents, and I had never visited at their house. They saw little society, and it was not probable that they would receive me — me, a young soldier, a young man of the world. Perhaps you will ask again why I should not have presented myself, as Mary's avowed suitor. Why ; I was penniless, I had no dependence of any kind, but my poor appointment in India, which was scarcely worth two hundred a-year, with little prospect of an increase, for four or five years at the least. How then was it possible that I could support a wife—and what right had I, situated as I was, to win the affections of any girl ? You will say perhaps, that because a

man is denied one blessing, it is no reason that he should be shut out from another,—because he does not enjoy riches, that he should not be suffered to enjoy love. Oh ! Gerard, it is a reason, at all events, it is *thought so*, and I began to reproach myself, for not having played the hypocrite, for not having thrown a cloak over the depth of my emotions, for not having worn an unsmiling face, and spoken in a cold measured voice—in short, for not having manifested an apathy, that it was utterly impossible to feel. Oh ! very many were the tears I shed, thinking of my sad destitution—oh ! very bitter and oft repeated were my exclamations, of ‘Edwin Anstruther, you are a beggar, and therefore what right have you to love ?’ I knew not what to do ; and in the desolation of my heart, I prayed that I might be permitted to die. Never, Gerard, until I began to love did I feel the curse of poverty to the full.”

CHAPTER XII.

LOVE—THE ALEMBIC.

“ I know

That love makes all things equal ; I have heard
 By my own heart this joyous truth averred ;
 The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,
 In love and worship blends itself with God.

* * * * *

“ I love thee and I feel

That on the fountain of my heart a seal
 Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright
 For thee ———

SHELLEY.

“ You ask me whether Mary returned my affection. I did not know when she quitted * * *, neither very well knew she, herself. It was evident that she delighted in my society, and delighted to be with me alone,—that she was well pleased with my conversation, and that in order to please

me she would have put herself to considerable inconvenience ; but whether her feelings towards me were those of friendship or of love, I could not very easily determine. We seemed, both of us, as by mutual consent, to have abstained from using the word *love* in all our dialogues. We spoke of *liking* one another, of *caring for* one another, of *feeling interested* in one another, but never of *LOVING* one another. Again, Mary never called me *Mr. Anstruther*, and yet she never called me *Edwin* ; she could not use the former name, it was too distant and formal, yet she did not like to use the latter, lest it might be thought unmaiden-like, and presuming in her, after so very short an acquaintance. As for myself, after the first week, I called her Mary, and I could well see that she liked thus to be addressed.

“ Perhaps, I weary you with these little traits, and that I tell my story too much in detail ; I will endeavour, therefore, to accelerate my pace ; and tell you, at once, what I subsequently discovered. Until she left me, Mary did not well know the real state of her own affections. She had never paused to analyze her feelings ; but had gone on from day to day as it were, in a dream of happiness. She thought that my manner towards her was strange ; she had never seen aught resembling it before. She thought that many of my speeches implied much more than they ex-

pressed, but she feared that she might misconstrue, and therefore, she endeavoured to forget them. She was not quite sure that I was in earnest; I might be playing with her, she thought, and yet she could scarcely believe me to be a hypocrite. I had never declared my love, and therefore she could not be certain—why should she interpret signs, and looks, and expressions, which might probably mean nothing, into symbols of love? Perhaps, this was only the warmth of my manner, my common way with the women. She could not well be assured to the contrary—and how terrible it would be to discover that she had invested my words with meanings which they were never intended to convey, and that after all, instead of being in love, I was only sporting with her, *pour passer le temps*. And in this state of incertitude, did Mary think it wise to shut out reflection altogether.

“But this dreamy condition of things was not suffered to endure very long, for the gentleman, to whom we were on a visit, seeing that we were in a dangerous position, suggested to Mary the advantage of an immediate return to her parents,—and this, not her illness, as I thought, was the cause of her sudden departure. Mary went—and *then* she discovered that I had crept into her poor little heart.

“She reached home, and she could not contain

herself; her heart was full, well nigh to suffocation; she burst into an agony of tears, and faltered out—*my name*.

“Then she was wretched. Should she ever see me again? Would I call, would I write, would she hear of me? Three or four days passed by, and she thought that I must be in London. At length came a packet containing a Magazine, with an article in it, bearing my signature; and there was a letter also, but merely a few lines, claiming an author’s privilege to present his works to his friends.

“But all this must be very wearisome, Gerard. Be it enough, that I called at her father’s house, and was admitted—that I repeated my visit—and received an invitation to dine—that very soon, I slept in the house, and was not suffered to depart next morning. I marvelled at the kindness of Mary’s parents, for I knew not that they were acquainted with her love.

“It was not very long before I discovered the true state of Mary’s affections. I felt happy, and yet I felt wretched, for I was miserably tongue-tied, and I knew not what to do. I was without money, and without prospects—how then could I make her my wife? But one day,—Oh! never will it be forgotten;—I was standing beside her with my arm around her neck, and my hand upon her shoulder, Gerard—we were looking at a piece

of fancy-work, which she had lately been employed upon; it was something that she was working for me—and there we stood, side by side, neither of us uttering a word. Our hearts were too full to speak. It was the silence of intense emotion. The tears gushed blindingly to my eyes. I raised my hand and laid it gently upon her head;—then slowly I drew back that beautiful head until it was pillowed upon my shoulder. I bent over her, and kissed her upon the forehead. ‘Oh! Mary, dear Mary,’ I exclaimed, ‘much better for us if we had never met—and never loved one another!’

“And there we stood, side by side—Mary’s head resting upon my shoulder, her eyes closed, and her beautiful face wearing an aspect of—— No, Gerard, no;—I see it before me now, I might paint it, but I cannot describe it. She was mine, mine for ever; it would have been vain to have asked her, for I knew it. I wanted no words to confirm my full assurance of her love. On the morrow, I spoke to Mr. Penruddock, and Mary was my betrothed wife.

“Nothing, in a worldly point of view, could have been less desirable than this union. I was the most ineligible of men—what the fashionables call a *detrimental*;—but, to Mary’s parents the one simple fact that we doated upon one another was sufficient. Of a certainty our prospects were

meagre in the extreme, but it was better to live in hope than in despair. We could not control the wanderings of our affections; we could not forget one another if we tried. Love is the most intractable of all the passions; we knew this, and therefore struggled we not against it; so Mary and I were betrothed.

“We were both of us young, and perhaps, it would have been better, under any circumstance, to have postponed our union for a year or two. There was no necessity for an immediate consummation, and in the mean time, we determined to enjoy the present, and not to pry into the secrets of the future; I obtained an extension of leave, and for a period I was inordinately happy.

“What a very Aaron's rod is this same passion of love! how all other thoughts are swallowed up by it! When love took possession of my soul it wrought an entire and radical change upon my morality. It was my salvation. Nothing could have been more lax than my way of life—nothing more unsettled and more unsatisfactory than my religious opinions, before I knew Mary Penraddock. I was not a sensualist, Gerard,—Oh! no, very far from that; my taste was too refined, and my delight in intellectual exercises too intense, to suffer me ever to wallow in the filthy slough of debauchery. In practice, I was infinitely more

moral than nine-tenths of my associates ; but my morality was a matter of taste, not of religious obligation. I had no fixed rules whereby I regulated the conduct of my life. I followed the guidance of my own inclinations, neither referring my actions in any way to the will of God or the opinions of men. I was exclusively my own arbiter. Sometimes with the world, sometimes against it—sometimes with God, oftener without him, I lived a most lawless life of soul-debasing inconsistency. But when love entered into my heart I became a new man. All the grosser portion of my nature was separated from the more pure and cast-out, as by a great alembic. My heart was no longer the lazar-house of vile lusts, but the sanctuary of hallowed affections. I yearned after the good and the beautiful. It was the one desire of my soul to render myself worthy to be beloved, and to liken myself unto the object of my love. I had once been ambitious—ambition left me :—praise-seeking—now I cared not for praise. I had once delighted in piling up knowledge ; even this seemed now a poor waste of time. All the tastes that I had most cherished, all the feelings which had most absorbed me, all the pursuits which had most engrossed me, were drowned in this great sea of love. It was an entire prostration, and sweeping away as it were, of my old moral edifice—pile

after pile was demolished, and a new structure raised upon their ruins—a chaste, simple, unvitiated structure—a structure of pure love.

“ I am becoming wordy and obscure — let me now descend a little to facts. Once betrothed to Mary Penruddock, her father’s house was ever open to receive me. I cannot find any adequate terms to express the happiness of that period. In the family of the Penruddocks I beheld something which was utterly—but beautifully—at discord with all my pre-conceived notions of humanity. I had never met with any persons resembling them before, and had never thought there was so much goodness in the world. All so quiet, so meek, so subdued—none of the hurry, and bustle, and turmoil, and excitement, and struggling to keep up appearances that I had been wont to see in the houses of other men. Life seemed to flow on with them tranquilly as a gentle stream. I envied them, and I felt humbled, for I knew that I was an inferior being—a creature of a viler clay—so I tried to become one of them—I subdued all my errant propensities—I walked in the paths of these good people, and assorted myself to all their goings on. I found this easy, for love had prepared the way, through feeling, for the entrance of principle. I gave up frequenting the theatres and the race-courses, and left off breaking the Sabbath. I read my bible, and re-

ceived the sacrament, and was altogether a regenerated man.

“ I loved Mary too well to desire that she should accompany me back to India, and be exposed to the evils of the dread climate from which I had suffered so much myself. And yet I knew not to what alternative I could resort. They who would have helped me were unable ; and they who could have helped were unwilling ; and without help nothing could be done. Poor Mary ! she was often troubled with vague presentiments of evil, and there were times when her heart misgave her that she should never see the consummation of her hopes. ‘ I am sure,’ she would say, ‘ it must be very wrong to love any fellow-creature so wholly and exclusively as I love you. And yet what is to be done ? You will be tired of my eternal presentiments, but I cannot help saying that I fear some thorn in the rose, which we are so engrossingly cherishing — or, perhaps, some sudden and destructive blight from Heaven will be sent to crop it altogether, and with it every hope of happiness and peace upon this side of the grave.’ And then she would tell me to ‘ keep myself from idols ;’ but confess that she could not practise what she preached.

“ But at length in the very midst of our difficulties, wandering on in darkness as we were, a light shone upon us suddenly from the very quar-

ter whence we least expected it. I am now, as you know well enough, the proprietor of the Charlton estates; but at the period of which I am now speaking, Gerard, I could not have raised five pounds upon my chance of coming to the inheritance. There were four lives between me and the estates, and my cousin was of marriageable age. But so it happened, that this young man, who was upon the eve of quitting the university, was killed by the bursting of a fowling-piece, when engaged in a shooting expedition, with a large party of his friends. My father, therefore, was heir-at-law to the estates, and he very speedily inherited them. A brain-fever, induced by anguish of mind consequent upon the death of his son, carried off my uncle, a few weeks after my cousin, and I was no longer a beggar in the world.

“ I threw up my commission immediately — my father made me a handsome allowance, and six months after the death of my uncle, Mary Penruddock became my wife. .

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BREAKING OF THE IDOLS.

“ ’Tis a story,
Such as in pealing thunders might be told —
Yet better lost in echoes o’er the sea,
Since none can thoroughly know what’s in the soul.
. . . . Sorrow is strong,
And I an unarmed and a childless man.”

HORNE’S *Cosmo de Medici*.

“ I THINK that it would have been impossible for any two beings to have loved one another more entirely than did we. Mary often said that it was sinful — that our love was too much like idolatry, and that it ought to be subdued ; yet she did not subdue it. Even now that our desires had been consummated, and that, to all appearance, we were basking in the full sun-light of security, poor Mary would still have her misgiv-

ings; and vague apprehensions of impending evil, when she was most happy and most buoyant, would rush suddenly upon her, and check the incipient laugh, or silence the half-uttered joke. Yet these moods of depression were very rare, and life to us was full of enjoyment.

“We went about from place to place, and having traversed England, we visited the Continent. Oh! Gerard, I was so purely happy throughout all this time — happy in the present, and full of hope in the future, for I was about very soon to be a *father*.

“I cannot describe to you the strange sensations of delight with which I anticipated this blissful event. How many plans did I form for the education of the unborn child — how many conjectures did I hazard as to the probable tenor of its life — how many absurd speculations were engendered in my mind as to the beauty, the genius, the virtues of the infant still in the womb. I felt assured that the child would be beautiful, gifted, and amiable like its mother, and I thought of my pride, my gratitude to God, my love for the babe, my increased love for the mother, and how beautiful Mary would look with the little suckling in her arms. The time approached — we returned to England, and took up our quarters in the Abbey.

“Gerard, another glass of wine. The hour

arrived, a man-child was born — I was a father — but the curse was upon us, and — Gerard — we suffered for our idolatry.”

“The mother died?”

“Oh! no — Gerard, not that — the mother lived, but the child, was a *monster*!

“A poor deformed, miserable object. They tried that I should not see it — they tried to conceal its infirmities with the clothes — but I took the babe into my hands, and I felt that it was a shapeless mass. My heart died within me, as though it had been crushed. I could not speak to the mother of the child.

“Gerard, now begin my confessions. Hitherto you have seen me as a man: I shall presently stand before you as a monster — more monstrous than my poor little babe. I seek to extenuate nothing — I was a brute, for I hated my child — from the hour of its birth I hated it — I could not look upon it without loathing, and my heart became full of evil thoughts. From that moment, another change passed over my spirit. I was no longer all love; I did not love Mary as I loved her before she had given birth to this *thing*, and yet still I loved her very dearly. It was only when she had the infant in her arms, that I looked upon her with altered feelings, and then — oh! it troubled me to see how Mary lavished her affection, and her

caresses upon this little lump of deformity just as though it had been a beautiful babe.

“ But much more did it trouble poor Mary to see my averted look, and extended arms, and to hear my indignant refusal to touch it, whenever it was brought into my presence. Oh ! very many bitter tears did she shed in secret, when she thought of the hatred that I bore to the child.

“ I had been married rather more than a year, when I found that my soul required some other aliment beside love. I was tired of utter indolence, and I longed for a more stirring life. I was wasting the prime of my manhood, and suffering my powers to decay. Was I, at the age of four-and-twenty, in the full vigour of my intellect, to subside into a state of dull inaction, and to be as one who had nothing more to do ? Was the sleepy stagnation of domestic life all-sufficient to satisfy the cravings of a soul like mine, conscious of its own great powers ? I had slept too long already ; and now I began to bestir myself. I panted after action and excitement. Home was no longer what home had been to me.

“ It happened that about this time, one of the representatives of a small borough-town, near Charlton Abbey, suddenly died ; and it struck me that this was an opportunity, which I should be a fool, were I idly to neglect. So I spoke to my

father ; he supplied me with resources ; and I was returned for the borough of M——.

“Then the long dormant cravings of ambition came back upon me, like the unclean spirit, with seven others more wicked than himself, and my last state was worse than my first. Gerard, I had the misfortune to succeed. My maiden-speech was a triumph ; I was an orator. My friends congratulated me, my party applauded me, the press noticed me, the public canvassed me — and finally, the ministry solicited me.

“But my wife — my Mary, grieved for me. She would sooner have seen me a quiet country clergyman, than the prime minister of a mighty nation. It was her ambition that I should be good and not great, that I should earn for myself an eternal, and not a temporal crown. She told me so — and I charged her with want of sympathy and said something or other about *cant*.

“And now I was thoroughly a worldling.

Society became my glittering bride,
And airy hopes my children.*

“I lived in a whirlpool of excitement. I was feverish, restless, and unsatisfied. I began to think that I had committed an act of egregious folly in marrying an unworldly wife. Had I been

* Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

single at this time, I might have advanced my fortune by some splendid alliance, for I was received in the houses of the great, and people of distinction courted me. And then, again, it was a constant source of mortification and annoyance to me, that Mary loved tranquillity and retirement; I could not drag her into society. It was evident that our interests clashed; we were ill-assorted, my thoughts were "of earth, earthy," but all her aspirations were heavenward. It offended me to hear her talk about country clergymen, for I regarded these good sort of people with very superior contempt.

"There was some change or other in the ministry, and I was offered an under-secretaryship in Ireland. I accepted it; and about this time, I became the father of another child — another boy, Gerard Oh! so unlike its elder brother was this little babe — this infant cherub — it was the most beautiful creature in the universe. I was now indeed a father,—I felt, I loved, I acted like a father. I was ever-ready to fondle my child, ever willing to throw aside my books, and my papers, to play with the little angel, and be happy. I thanked God for this great mercy — I had never thanked Him for my first-born — but this was indeed a blessing — a child, not a *lusus naturæ* — a sweet little smiling cherub, not a monster of deformity, and I felt what it is to be a father.

“My hard heart was softened again. Love and ambition were the master passions of my soul,—now one, now the other was dominant. Ambition had held the supremacy for a year, but now love began to rule in its stead. I had never ceased wholly to love my wife, but as the mother of a monster, and as the opposer of my ambition, she had not been all in all to me, she had held but a corner of my heart. But now that she was the mother of a beautiful babe — oh ! how empty, how worthless was worldly honour — how discordant seemed the voice of ambition. I loved as I had loved her as Mary Penruddock. I idolized both her and her babe.

“And now I was very happy — performing the duties of my particular office, with all due zeal and assiduity, yet at the same devoting many hours of the day to the calm delights of domestic enjoyment. And how happy was Mary to behold me once again, “using the world as not abusing it,” doing my duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call me, but not abandoning myself wholly to the allurements of vanity, nor living in a whirlpool of unholy excitement. And thus a year passed away. I served my party more by my writings than my oratory. I was contented, and I desired not to rise.

“And then another child was born unto me — a girl, even more lovely than my beautiful boy — a girl with its mother’s face — and the cup of my happiness was full.

“Then began I to sin grievously, Gerard, I *idolized* these two children and their mother. I could not moderate my affection, I could not love them but with my whole soul. God is “a jealous God,” remember this, for I think that in your nature, Gerard, there is that which may lead you to idolatry. Be warned — for the hand of the Almighty is strong, and idols of clay are brittle.

“*I* was warned, but I hearkened not to the warning voice. My wife told me that I was sinning. She convinced me that it was unrighteous to love overmuch ; but what could I do, Gerard ? I ought to have loved God more, and to have loved my children less, but I could not. I tried ; at least I flattered myself with the thought that I had tried, but my whole heart was not in my trials. I did not ‘ask in prayer believing,’ and therefore I did not ‘receive.’

“Moreover, I sinned in another way. Mine could not have been the pure, abstract love of my own offspring ; for I loved not my first-born child. I doated upon my second boy and my little girl, more because they were lovely and pleasing to look upon, than because they were the children of

my loins. I ought to have loved my first-born more dearly than the others, because he more stood in need of my affection. But I could not—I could not love him—he was a very thorn in the side of my happiness—a very canker in the rose of my delight.

“But Mary loved the little deformity even more than she loved her beautiful children, and this in time began to disquiet me. I know that this is a common thing, Gerard; I know that a mother’s love is often showered more plenteously upon the stunted, than upon the flourishing plant; and of a certainty it is good that it should be so. But indeed, indeed I could not bear it—to my morbid vision it was profane—it was like a turning away from the beautiful idols of old Greece and Rome, to worship the grotesque, barbaric deformities of the graven images, which the Indian adores. I often reproached my wife for this heresy, and she would look upon me silently in reply. Gerard, even now I can call to mind the meek reproaches of the look, which she would turn upon me—a look which appealed at the same time that it upbraided, yet I was deaf both to the upbraiding and the appeal.

“And thus nearly four years passed away, and we were still residing in Dublin—I was occasionally summoned by my parliamentary duties—but what does all this signify—give me some more wine,

Gerard, and I will finish this painful history at once.

“ A few more sentences will do it. I need not trace, through all its stages, the progress of the disease that has destroyed me. I need not tell you how day after day, month after month, the sickening disgust, with which I contemplated my poor deformed boy, grew stronger, until it worked me into madness. Had he not been my first-born, I might have tolerated it ; but that he with his misshapen body, and his stunted distorted limbs, should stand between my beautiful Edwin, and the inheritance (for I must tell you that my elder brother died at Madras, whilst we were in Dublin,) was a never-failing source of turbulent emotion in my breast, and I could not cast out the demon that tormented me. The curse was upon me, Gerard—I had bowed down to idols, and it was the will of the Almighty, that the sin should work its own punishment and destroy me.

“ In proportion as I doated upon my two younger children, did I loathe and abhor their elder brother. The one passion seemed to spring out of the other, and they kept pace in their subsequent development. But to her first-born did the mother still cling the more tenaciously, as I thought, for my hatred of him. And then another unclean spirit began to tear my diseased soul. I thought that Mary loved

the deformed child solely from a spirit of opposition—that she caressed him, and was kind to him to work my annoyance,—that she derived a malicious pleasure from praising the amiable qualities of the boy in my presence, and always endeavoured to conciliate my affections in his behalf at those very seasons when I was most exasperated against him. The effect of this monomania was that in time I became a brute, and treated my poor wife—my saint-like Mary—with barbarity.

“But still would she appeal to me in behalf of my first-born. Fully confiding in the justice of her cause, no unkindness could shake her resolution. She was the unshrinking advocate of the persecuted, and the helpless; I might frown upon her, but she was not to be shaken—oh! thou blessed martyr in a righteous cause, I look upon my hands and they are incarnadined.

“One day—one dreadful day—now, at length I have come to the crisis of my history. The merciless demon was at work in my bosom. I was in one of my most turbulent moods, when Mary entered my study with her favorite deformity—my study, where it had never been before, where I had peremptorily forbidden it to be brought. She came there, with a book in her hand, to shew me the marvellous progress that the

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child had made in his studies. She came to taunt me, as I thought, with the moral worth and the intellectual beauty of the little monster, and to upbraid me for setting up matter above mind, for thinking more of the shell than of the kernel. She did say something about this, but there was exceeding mildness in the words that she employed, and exceeding gentleness in the tones, which uttered them. But they were enough to lash my spirit into a whirlpool of passionate excitement. Never before had the exacerbation of my feelings been so intense as they were at that moment. I scarcely knew what I did. I was insane. I uttered a terrific imprecation, dashed the book, that I had been reading, to the ground, struck the child with the palm of my hand on the face, so violently that he howled with anguish, and then thrust the mother and her deformed favourite, with frantic energy, out of my chamber.

“ I locked the door, and I picked up the book that I had been reading, but I found that I could not read. So I rang the bell, ordered a horse to be saddled, and was soon scouring the country, in one of those terrific fevers of excitement, which rapidity of motion alone can allay. When I returned, I sate myself down again to my desk, but the book which I had been reading was gone; and

in its place I found a small slip of paper, marked with the hand-writing of my wife.

“She had taken the book, Gerard—it was the last thing she had seen me touch, and she took it as a memorial—for she had fled. Yes, Gerard, the wife of my bosom had gone from me, taking with her our three children. She did not, she could not mean to desert me altogether: she had gone, as a warning, as a lesson to me; terrible the warning, and long-abiding the lesson—for on that night, Gerard, a storm arose—I saw it rising from my chamber window,—I saw the heavens blackening, and I heard the winds howling; then thought I of my wife and children, and trembled.

“I knew that the vessel in which she had sailed, for I had visited the quay, hoping that I might stay the progress of the fugitives, was but a small craft, and I trembled for its safety. It was, indeed, a dreadful night, and I trembled. The thunder roared, and I thought that it was the voice of God speaking to me, and bidding me to despair. I did not attempt to sleep. I did not lay my head upon the pillow. I sate by the open window, watching the storm, and ever and anon, in a voice of agony, beseeching God to pacify the elements. But he hearkened not, Gerard, he hearkened not, and the vessel perished in the storm—

my wife and my children were drowned in the great waters—*my idols were all broken.*”

“But the book,” I exclaimed in a choking voice, for I was almost suffocated with emotion, “the name of the book, Edwin,—the book that she took with her?”

“ERASMUS’ COLLOQUIES, Gerard.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WITNESS CROSS-EXAMINED.

We are old friends —

You are a gentleman, whom all respect

Most justly

. I'll tell you candidly,

Without the least false harmony of disguise,

Upon my word I know not what to think.

HORNE'S *Cosmo de Medici*.

Two days after this, I was again at S——, on my way back to the metropolis. I had ridden thither, and I was to sleep at the Hotel, so as to proceed early on the following morning, by one of the public conveyances. I did not, this time, pay a visit to my friend Arundel, for my mind was in such a state of inquietude and excitement, that I preferred the solitude of an Inn.

But it happened that I was not fated to pass my evening alone, for I had scarcely quitted the stables, after having looked to the horses, and entered the coffee-room, ere I beheld old Smith coming out to meet and to welcome me.

“What are you doing here?” I exclaimed.

“Why, I thought that I told you the last time we met, that I was going to see the doctor,” said Smith.

“Oh! yes, to see old Goodenough; but what a long visit you have paid!”

“I have been elsewhere, though,” said Smith, “visiting some of our old school-fellows; but I’m going back, to-morrow, to London.”

“So am I—we’ll travel up together—”

“*Volontiers*; but where have you been?”

“To Charlton Abbey.”

“What a strange vagrant creature you are! Don’t you think that it would be more respectable if you could control your erratic propensities. But what account can you render of yourself? What have you been doing, this last fortnight?”

“My life has been crowded with incidents.”

“Oh! I do not at all doubt,” returned Smith, “that you have got into plenty of scrapes, which you dignify with the title of incidents. But tell me, what good you have done.”

“A great deal; that is, I expect much good *will* accrue from my doings.”

“ Ah! always the future in *rus*—your mountains are always in labour—your good always prospective—but speak out, Doveton, for I like to hear the proceedings of a psychological curiosity like yourself.”

“ *A psychological curiosity!*—but come, Smith, I *will* tell you. Remember, though, that I speak confidentially, and that what I tell you is a profound secret.”

“ Oh! I hate secrets,” returned Smith, “ I’d rather that you would not tell me.”

“ What! can’t you keep them?”

“ I dare say that I could, if I were to try; but I have no ambition to make the trial.”

“ Nonsense; but I wish you to listen, because I want your advice; and when you have listened, I am sure that you will see there is occasion for secrecy.”

“ If I can do you any service by listening,” returned Smith, “ I will lend an ear to your story. But don’t be very prosy about it; for I hate a long-winded—”

“ Upon my word, Smith,” I exclaimed, waxing somewhat wroth with the man of sense, “ you are the most provoking—yes, and the most inconsistent—though you pique yourself upon your consistency—of mortals. You ask me, one moment to render an account of myself; say that you like to hear of my proceedings, and then you make

it a favour to listen to me, and tell me not to be prosy."

"Go on——"

"It is not my nature to be prosy, but I won't quarrel with you any more: So listen,"—and I began, succinctly as possible, to acquaint Smith, with all that I knew concerning the history both of Anstruther and the Moores. Smith listened with wrapt attention, and apparently with a high degree of interest—it was certainly no every-day narrative that I was now communicating to my friend. But suddenly, when I was well entangled in the labyrinth of my story, I came to a full stop."

"Why, what's the matter now?" asked Smith.

"Oh!" I said, and I stammered as I spoke, "I begin to think that I have no right in the world to let you into Mr. Anstruther's secrets. It is a great breach of confidence, I fear—very improper and very dishonourable."

"You have not," replied Smith, "let me into his secrets, I am sure. You have only told me what your uncle communicated to you relating to Mrs. Moore, or Mrs. Kirby, and what you have seen of the lady herself. But tell me nothing, I beseech you, that Mr. Anstruther has told you in confidence, for it *would* be dishonourable so to do."

I pondered for a few minutes, and then replied, "But I can make the story to you perfectly intel-

ligible, without any breach of confidence whatever," and then I proceeded even to the end, winding up with this notable peroration :

"And now, Smith, after all I have told you — after summing all the evidence, and considering all the coincidences of the case, does it not appear to you, as it appears to me, very plain (with a marked emphasis) *that Michael and Ella Moore are the children of Mr. Anstruther?*"

"*Not—in—the — least,*" replied Smith, with still more decision of emphasis.

"I wonder at your little comprehension."

"And I at your great credulity."

"But consider the strong chain of evidence —"

"A Grand Jury would throw out such a bill without five minutes consultation."

"But let us go over it link by link —"

"The very way to prove its nullity —"

"And, firstly, the book then, Smith. The *Erasmus*, which Mrs. Moore gave me. Consider this circumstance well. It undoubtedly had once been Anstruther's — his initials and his coat-of-arms are in it."

"But that proves nothing," returned Smith, "books like money, often change their owners."

"Oh ! but this was the very identical book which Mrs. Anstruther took with her when she went —"

“What is that?” asked Smith, eagerly, “you did not tell me that before.”

I felt the warm blood mounting to my face, and then I sickened, for I had grievously committed myself, “Oh! Smith,” I faltered out, “the words escaped me unawares; I did not intend to tell you — I am not fit to be trusted with a secret — how mean and dishonourable, and contemptible, I must appear in your eyes.”

“Not at all; only rather unguarded; but now that you have let out the fact, we may as well make the most of it as evidence. You say that Mrs. Anstruther, when she embarked, had certainly this book in her possession.”

“Yes, or another resembling it.”

“As is most probably the case — ”

“But then the fifty pound note.”

“Well, and how does your ingenuity account for that?”

“Why; I’ll tell you — of all men in the world, the most careless about money matters is Anstruther. I don’t know any one more likely to have placed a bank note between the pages as a mark.”

“But I thought you said that it was fastened in with a wafer.”

“And so it was — but in all my calculations, I have quite lost sight of this fact. But now you mention it, I think that Mrs. Anstruther — as,

owing to certain circumstances, she embarked suddenly, may in her hurry have taken the note from her desk about the same time that she took the book, and having no other purse ready at the time, she may have made a purse of the book, and put the note between its pages for security."

"Ingenious — but it goes no way to establish the identity of the volume. However, Doveton, I will cede this point to you. The Erasmus now in your possession is the very identical book, which Mrs. Anstruther had with her when she was drowned. What does this prove? Simply, that though the vessel went down, some part, at least, of its cargo was washed ashore. Now for it; what next?"

"Excuse me for a moment," and I left the room, but soon returned with two pictures in my hand. "Now look at these portraits, Smith, the one is the likeness of Ella Moore, the other of Mary Penruddock, — now is there not a wonderful resemblance?"

"But what has Mary Penruddock to do with it?"

"Mrs. Anstruther and Mary Penruddock are one; but do you not see the resemblance?"

"Undoubtedly — there is a very strong resemblance, it would be impossible to help seeing it — but there may have been two Mary Penruddocks in England at the same time."

“Oh ! yes ; there may have been certainly, and two Ella Moores.”

“But does Anstruther acknowledge this picture to be a good likeness of his wife ?”

“He has never seen it.”

“Who painted it then ?”

“Arundel painted it in Flanders.”

“Was she ever there as Miss Penruddock ?”

This staggered me. “I should think not, nay, I am sure not.” But then, after a pause, I added, “Arundel took the sketch unknown to the parties, and only discovered the young lady’s name by seeing it on the lid of a box, or in the cover of a book — if the latter, her maiden name may well have been presented to his view.”

“Granted.”

“And, moreover, I must tell you that, upon showing Ella’s portrait to Anstruther, he was strangely agitated, and it seemed that certain painful recollections had been called to his mind by the sight of the picture.”

“Another proof, certainly, that Ella Moore is wonderfully like Mrs. Anstruther — the pictures themselves bear sufficient evidence without any further corroboration. But likeness does not prove consanguinity. Any thing else ?”

“Yes ; Michael Moore tells me that among the effects of his reputed mother, he has discovered a jewel box, and that many of the trinkets

bear the initials M. C. P. Now these letters signify nothing less than Mary Catherine Penraddock."

"We'll dismiss this as we dismissed the *Erasmus* — cargo cast ashore," said Smith.

"But coupling this with Ella's likeness to Mrs. Anstruther — "

"A singular coincidence," rejoined Smith.

"Then Michael Moore distinctly remembers a time, when he lived in a great house with porticoes and pillars, and rolled on cushions of velvet."

"He has probably dreamt of these things, and now he fancies that he remembers them."

"But Ella Moore recollects the same."

"Oh! they may have been once in their lives in a fine house, and the very strangeness of the circumstances causes them both to remember it. You cannot derive any thing from such a source as this, I am sure."

"Very little in the way of proof, but much in the way of conjecture."

"You have conjectures enough," returned Smith, "what we now want is proof."

"We must find out Paul Phillips."

"Who is he?"

"The man who *knows all* — as Mrs. Moore told me ere she died."

"Well; the sooner you find him the better —

but just tell me this. If Mrs. Anstruther and her children were drowned, how can they now possibly be living?"

"Not very easily to be sure — but my hope that they were not drowned."

"And you think then that this Mrs. Moore is or rather was — the wife of your friend, and that the young Moores are his children? Mrs. Moore *alias* Kirby, *alias* Anstruther — well done, Doveton — a very she-Cerberus, 'three gentlewomen once.'"

"No, no, Smith — I think nothing of the kind. I have satisfactorily proved that Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Colonel Kirby are one. Mrs. Anstruther has naught to do with this."

"Then what on earth can Mrs. Colonel Kirby have to do with Mrs. Anstruther's children?"

"I don't know."

"Nor any one else — and how comes it that all these conjectures of yours, you leave out the elder boy Moore?"

"Because he is so unlike the others."

"Have you no other reason?"

"Why, yes — Mr. Anstruther's first-born is deformed."

"And what has become of him, then?"

"I really can't tell."

"Nor any one else, Doveton. 'Tis altogether an airy thing of the imagination — utterly with

substance — nothing that can be admitted as evidence, nothing that can convince the reason, nothing that can ever be reduced to proof. If ever you give me a brief, Doveton, when I am called to the bar, give me a better case than this, or never employ me as your counsel.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FELLOW-TRAVELLERS.

The first a man of sense, yet I dislike him,
He reasons and retreats —
The other hath a wit beyond himself;
Its spirit uttering things he knows not whence,
Why, how, or whither.

HORNÆ's *Cosmo de Medici*.

SMITH and I travelled up together on the outside of the coach to London. It was very cold, and I was by no means inclined to be communicative during the journey. Indeed I am the most sulky of travellers always, for I seldom condescend to bestow a word, upon any of my *compagnons du voyage*.

Smith, on the other hand, was intolerably loquacious, whilst I was wrapt up in a shroud of thought, speculating, scheming, foretelling, my whole soul with Anstruther and the Moores, and the external world being as nothing to me, Smith was talking to one of his fellow-travellers upon the most common-place subjects imaginable, asking all manner of trivial questions, and taking the utmost pains to elicit information, which *I* would not have burthened myself with possessing. It appeared that the man, with whom he was conversing, was a farmer; for Smith, with as much minuteness as if he had been one of a committee of inquiry, was cross-examining the wretch upon divers matters connected with the state of agriculture, and other things equally unimportant. The soil of the county through which we were passing, the general condition of the poorer orders, the necessity of a poor law reform, the breed of horses, the adaptation of machinery to agricultural purposes, the progress of rail-roads, and other matters *ejusdem generis*, unworthy as I thought to arrest the attention of any creature professing to be rational, were inquired into, and descanted upon by Smith, just as though he had been actually interested in them.

When the farmer left us, which he did at A——, Smith turned round to me and said, “If you wish

to gain information, Doveton, mount every man you meet upon his hobby."

"We had not proceeded far before there was a claimant for the seat which had just been vacated by the farmer, and in less than five minutes the indefatigable Smith had discovered what was the calling of the man, and there he was hammering away at the coal trade, just as perseveringly as a quarter of an hour before he had been labouring at the state of agriculture. It was really quite enough to sicken one.

I don't know why I should have been so indignant against the corn and the coal trades; for I confess, that I should not like very much to go without bread when I am hungry, and without a fire when I am cold.

But I cannot endure common-place —

I don't think that it would be very easy to determine the precise boundaries of common-place. I cannot pause to investigate the matter now, but I may just casually observe that in my younger days I looked upon all that country, which lies beyond

"the limits of the sphere of dream,"

as indisputably the land of common-place; and all people, but the visionaries of the world, regarded I as the inhabitants of that land.

We had accomplished nearly a moiety of our journey, when a sudden thought flashed upon my brain, and laying my hand upon the shoulder of my friend, I exclaimed in an eager voice, "Smith, I have just thought of something that escaped my recollection last night."

"Don't speak quite so loud," said Smith, in an under-tone, "unless you wish *all* our fellow-travellers to hear you."

"I quite forgot where we are," said I, moderating my voice.

"I don't doubt it," returned the man of sense; "for you have been travelling in Dream-land, these last three hours."

"But at all events I have dreamt something worth telling you."

"Oh! if it is only a dream —"

"Nay, Smith," I interrupted, "it is a fact."

"But facts and visions are so inextricably blended in your mind, that you cannot separate the one from the other."

"Oh! yes, I can — now listen to this — I quite forgot to tell you yesterday, that Michael Moore perfectly remembers having been in a storm at sea, when a child."

"Does he, indeed?"

"Yes," said I, triumphantly, for I thought that this was a strong presumption in favour of the case that I was so anxious to make out.

Smith smiled one of his incredulous, hope-subduing smiles, and then said, "Mr. Moore was a soldier; was he not?"

"Certainly — a serjeant of artillery."

"Employed in the Peninsular war?"

"Yes — and killed at St. Sebastian."

"England is an island — is it not?"

"How can you ask such a question?"

"Because I thought it very probable," replied Smith, "that this circumstance had escaped you altogether."

"What do you mean?"

"That taking the fact of the insular position of England into consideration, it is probable that in passing from Spain to Great Britian, the Moores traversed the sea, and made use of a ship."

"Undoubtedly — how ridiculous you are!"

"Well, Doveton — and it is not altogether impossible that they may have met with stormy weather on their passage from Spain, as Mrs. Anstruther did on her passage from Dublin. Experience I believe has ascertained the fact, that the Bay of Biscay is exposed to the influence of the winds full as much as the Irish Channel."

There was something in all this so very unanswerable, that I held my peace for the remainder of the journey; whilst Smith continued his sickening conversation with the coal-merchant, the coal-meter, the coal-heaver, or whatever the

creature really was. I cannot say that I felt very sorry when we began to rattle along the streets of the metropolis, and I knew that in less than an hour I should have passed the threshold of my Uncle Pemberton's house.

CHAPTER XVI.

VALENTINE AND ORSON.

They are not brothers — never yet were men
More different in their natures. Brothers, say you ?
Why then the graceful, meek-eyed antelope
Is brother to the shaggy-coated wolf —
The gentle dove twin-sister to the vulture —
Or any other creatures most unlike,
Born of one womb.

MS.

I HAD scarcely passed the garden gates of the rectory, when to my surprise, I beheld Michael Moore running out bare-headed to salute me. It was nearly dark, but he had caught the outline of my figure from the window, and he was determined to be the first to greet me.

“What! you here, Michael, too,” I exclaimed, “how very, very glad I am of that.”

“Oh! yes, I arrived here yesterday,” replied Michael, “I thought that Ella would want me in London, and when I reached there I found that she was gone, and they told me that she had gone to your uncle’s, and that you had gone to Mr. Anstruther’s; but here we are once more congregated — Lawrence, and Ella, and ‘little Bo-peep’ as we call her — oh! how grateful we ought to be to your uncle.”

“Is my uncle at home, Michael?”

“No—he has gone out to dine, but Miss Pemberton is at home. They are all sitting together round the fire — how happy they will be to see *you*.—You cannot think how we have talked about you—it is difficult to say who is the most eloquent, but I rather think that Ella bears the palm.”

“Bless her—God bless her!” I exclaimed with all the fervour of a young lover.

And there they sate round the fire — Ella, and my cousin Emily, and Lawrence and little Beau-pied. How beautiful they all looked together.

Ella and my cousin Emily sate side by side, and on my cousin’s other hand was a vacant chair, whereon Michael had lately been sitting. Little Beau-pied sate upon a stool at Larry’s feet, with her head resting against the knees of her protec-

tor. I do not think that I ever beheld a lovelier cluster of faces.

Up started they all to welcome me. My cousin Emily was at the door in a moment. "Come along, Gerard—we were just talking about you.—Come to the fire, you must be cold.—Papa has gone out, so I am your hostess, and my business it is to see you comfortable. Now off with that great coat—what a terrific weight it is, to be sure—and that great huge worsted thing round your neck. Now, come to the fire, Gerard, for you at length wear the aspect of humanity—before, you looked, for all the world, like a great outlandish, polar bear."

I kissed my pretty little cousin, and I longed to kiss Ella Moore.

"Oh!" thought I, "if Mary Penruddock was indeed lovely as Ella Moore, I wonder not that poor Anstruther found it difficult to keep himself from idols."

"I was just going to read to them," said Michael, "when we heard your ring at the bell. 'Who can that be?' said Miss Pemberton. 'Oh! if it should be Mr. Doveton!' cried Ella; and I looked out of the window, and behold! Mr. Doveton it was."

I took a low stool, and seated myself in the centre of the group;—"Oh! I like sitting thus,"

I exclaimed, for they wished to extend their circle that I might sit, like them, upon a chair. "Oh! I like sitting thus exceedingly, for I am so thoroughly fenced in with friends—I am so literally in the very midst of you all. Now, I wont interrupt the reading; give *me* the book, and I will read to you."

And I read, by the light of the blazing fire, some chapters of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Even Ella, sorrowful as she was, laughed over "the gross of green spectacles."

Then we prepared for dinner, and dinner came; and after dinner Emily sang and played to us, and the evening passed pleasantly away.

My uncle Pemberton came home at an early hour, as was his wont, that nothing might interfere with the duties of family devotion. He dismissed us all with a blessing, and then I retired to the solitude of my chamber.

I had not been long in my room when I heard somebody rapping at the door; "Come in," I answered.

It was Michael.

He had something, like a jewel-box, in his hand.

"I have come here," said he, "at this unseasonable hour, because, perhaps, it is the only time when we shall be able to converse in private. Oh! Gerard, how truly has it been said, that

‘strange things are let out by death.’ Who could ever have divined that my poor mother was the mother of Lady Euston? How astounded you must have been by the intelligence.”

“Nay, Michael, I knew it all before.”

“And whence did you learn it, Gerard?”

“From my uncle.”

“Then he knows our history.”

“Oh! well—he knew your mother, when she was Mrs. Colonel Kirby; and this makes him so much interested in you all.”

“Then he must have known Colonel Kirby,” exclaimed Michael, eagerly;—“Oh! Gerard, how fortunate is this.”

“In what respect, Michael?”

“He can rid me,” returned my friend, “of the painful uncertainty which distresses me; at least on one particular point. He can tell me whether or not this portrait is the likeness of Colonel Kirby.” And as he said this, Michael took from the box, in his hand, a small golden-mounted miniature.

I looked at it. It was not the portrait of Colonel Kirby—but, it was the portrait of Edwin Anstruther!

I had expected this, for Michael had told me in his letter, that there was a miniature amongst the jewels, and I was certain that the jewels were Mrs. Anstruther’s.

"They say," resumed Michael, "that the face is like mine; do you see the resemblance, Gerard?"

"I do, Michael; I certainly do. This is not Colonel Kirby's picture."

"How do you know?"

"I am sure that it is not. The Colonel was a dark-haired man. I have heard my uncle describe him."

"Do you think, then, that it is the portrait of my father?"

"*I do think so, Michael.*"

"What, of Serjeant Moore? I scarcely think, Gerard, that it looks like a non-commissioned officer."

"But I have heard my uncle," said I, evasively, "speak of this Serjeant Moore, as being a man of good family and education."

"How came he, then, a gunner of artillery?" asked Michael, eagerly.

"He quarrelled with his friends, and enlisted," said I.

"Then this may be his picture," returned Michael, thoughtfully; "but the jewels—they were not my mother's—"

"How know you?"

"They were not Mrs. Kirby's jewels, for they are many of them marked M.C.P."

“ And what was Mrs. Kirby’s maiden name?”

“ Her maiden name?—Ah! Sir Reginald told me—her maiden name—yes, it was *Pelham*.”

“ Then this accounts for it; Mary *something*, Pelham.”

“ No, Gerard, no—her name was not Mary—all her letters are signed Emily Kirby—who then is this M. C. P.?”

I was silent, and Michael continued, “ I think, Gerard, that you know more than you will tell me—but speak out, I beseech you, if you do. Oh! my best of friends, for such ever have you been, take compassion upon me, and aid me in my difficulties. Oh! Gerard, I was the happiest creature in the universe, before the wily dæmon of ambition whispered into my ear that I was not born to be a cottager. In my early boyhood, who more joyous than I—who more tranquil—who more contented? It was delight enough for me to live. Wherever I looked there was a blessing, wherever I went there was peace. At my up-risings, and my down-sittings, I was serene and happy. My dreams were of pleasant things, and my waking thoughts were without care. And thus I lived till I was nearly seventeen, when strange and unaccountable yearnings began to disquiet me. I felt the promptings of an unknown spirit within—of a spirit which, up to this

point, had slept. Then began I to be restless and unsatisfied. Nature was not what nature had been to me before. Its beauties and benignities did not steal into my heart unbidden; I was compelled to solicit them—I now subdued myself, as it were, to their influences, but formerly I had been subdued by them. Then did I feel that I was changed. Nature became a remedy—a solace—a protection—it was no longer the one delight of an untroubled breast. I had something to escape from; I was a fugitive, and nature was my sanctuary, not my home.

“Oh! Gerard,” continued my friend, “how much better, indeed, would it have been if those strange infantine reminiscences, concerning which we have spoken together already, had been suffered to remain dormant. But when I began to remember, I began to aspire, and I panted after a higher condition. I looked around me and I became a watcher of men. Before, I had been contented with regarding the inanimate works of the creation; and mankind, beyond the sphere of my own family, had been to me a sealed book. But now, though I mingled not with men, I scanned their outward peculiarities; I saw that I was not like others whom fortune had made my compeers. With the brutal and the unrefined I had no sympathy; I could not but feel that I was above them, that I was higher in the scale

of humanity than the common herd of cottage-born mortals. A loftier instinct was within me. I knew it—and then my peace of mind was gone.

“What I am, Gerard, I know. Who I am, would that it were permitted me to know. Some great mystery envelopes my birth. I am sure of it—my own and Ella’s recollections—certain words, which have dropped, at divers times, from the mouth of our reputed mother—this miniature, this box of jewels, all tend to strengthen my conviction. Now, Gerard, I ask you, and I implore you, to answer me, do you know more than I do of this matter?”

I was silent, for I knew not what to answer. I was in a painfully embarrassing situation—compelled either to tell a direct falsehood, or to touch upon matters, which I felt it would be dangerously premature to enter upon so early. I knew not which course to adopt; and I longed for some out-let of evasion.

But Michael could not brook the tardy coming of my answer; he was in a fever of impatience, and he continued to address me in a tone of rapid impetuosity. “Oh! Gerard, I implore you to speak; and yet your silence answers my question. You *do* know more of this matter—perhaps you even know who I am. Oh! tell me—at least you are acquainted, I am sure, with the original

of this picture. Gerard, upon this portrait I rely—if there be hope of tracing my parentage, upon this picture does that only hope rest.”

I was about to make answer, evasively—to equivocate in some specious fashion—when I heard the voice of Lawrence Moore at the door. “We had better now be silent,” said Michael, tremulously, and at the same time he concealed the miniature, and set the jewel-box upon my toilet-table. “Lawrence knows nothing of this, and therefore, we had better be silent.”

Larry entered the room, with a brisk step, indicative of the rapid improvement which his health had lately undergone. “May I have a share in the cozey,” said he, laughing, “for Mike has left me all alone in the room, and I a’nt very fond of my own company, being somewhat of a social turn. Neither am I sleepy, a bit—and I feel so hearty to-night—just in the way for a talk—so I thought that I’d pay you a visit, and see if my company be welcome. You may turn me out, if you like, directly; or, when you’ve had enough of me, bid me to be gone.”

I could not help smiling at Larry’s rough mode of introducing himself; but I told him that he was heartily welcome, and bade him to take a chair by the fire. Larry seated himself, thrust out his legs, crammed his hands into his pockets, and then began to sigh for — *a pipe*.

“I think,” said he, “that I could be happy as a prince now, if I were but blowing a cloud,” and then his lips began to move themselves as they had been used to do, when a pipe was pressed gently between them.

“I think,” said I, laughing, “that you would astonish my uncle if you were to attempt to fumigate his house.”

“Of course I can’t think of it in earnest,” returned Lawrence, “not in the least, whilst I am staying with your uncle. But it is such a very long time since I have enjoyed the luxury of a pipe — not since the fever came upon me. I have not been out yet to reconnoitre; but I dare say there’s a public in the neighbourhood.”

“But you won’t think of going there, will you? My uncle — ”

“Ay, there it is. Your uncle has been kind to me beyond all things, and, indeed, I’m heartily obliged to him; but I really begin already to feel rather sick of playing the gentleman. I was not cut out for such a life — I was never intended for a high-flyer. It may be all well enough in its way, when you’ve been regularly brought up to the thing; but to be dashed into the thick of it at once, and to have a straight-waistcoat clapped upon you. Every thing so clock-work and regular; nothing a bit liberty-like — none of the free-and-easy about it. I can’t say that I admire the

sort of thing, so I think — now I beg you not to suppose that I am ungrateful for speaking in this way — I think, with your uncle's permission, that I shall make a bolt of it as quickly as possible."

"Oh! Larry, Larry!" cried Michael, reproachfully.

"Nay, Mike; don't look so sorry about it," resumed Larry, in a soothing voice; "I would'nt have said any thing on the subject, if I had thought that it would make you uneasy. But you know as well as I do, dear Mike, that I am not cut out for a gentleman. Now I think that you *are*, every inch of you; and as for Ella, she looks the lady full as well as any duke's daughter in the land. But I, though I an't amiss to look at, could never do a bit of gentlemanly in my life, and it's no use telling a lie about it — so Mike, I beg and intreat you not to look so down in the mouth."

Michael endeavoured to smile; but his heart was heavy-laden, and his brain was distracted with many contending thoughts. He looked at Lawrence; then at me, — his eyes glistening with tears all the while; and then, as though he were anxious to escape into solitude, that he might give free vent to his emotions, he bade God bless me, and hurried out of the room.

"Michael's a cup too low to-night," said Lawrence, when his brother was gone. "I could al-

"I should have thought," said I, "that you had suffered enough from your player-freaks already."

"No — no — you are wrong there," said Lawrence, "I suffered for cutting the concern. If I had stuck to the business properly, I should never have been so near hopping the twig. But after I left the troop, I went to London, and lived a little while on my savings. I took a lodging for little Beau-pied and myself. She was rather a clog round my neck, but the poor dear thing was so fond of me, and I was so fond of the poor dear thing, that I would not have abandoned her for the world; so we two lived together like brother and sister, and for a little time we were tolerably comfortable. But money won't last for ever, and I soon found mine getting low. I scarcely knew what to do. There is no place so difficult as London to get work, though there is so much work to be done there. I used to go out in the streets looking about me, as though I hoped to find gold on the pavements, but I never returned home any richer. If it had not been for the child, I should have gone to sea, or enlisted, but for her sake I was obliged to stay at home.

"Well; as I was walking along the streets one day, who should come up with me but one of the old troop — a strange creature as ever lived in the world — the fellow, who was always our clown.

If ever there were a mixture of the knave and the fool in any one person, it was in him. He gave me a knowing wink of the eye, and would not let me pass on, as I would have done, without taking notice of the fellow. 'Don't fear my peaching,' said he, 'for I've quarrelled with the company, as you have; but come into the next lush-shop and have a booze, for the sake of old fellowship, my hearty.' So I went, for I had never any weighty objections against a pipe and a glass in my life.

"So we talked over old days, and my companion told me that he had flared up with the manager, and had a bit of a fight — old Centaur getting the best of it, of course, for the fellow is as strong as a Hercules, and so he had walked off from the troop, leaving them to fish for a clown. Well, as we continued to talk, we found that we were both of us, as you see, upon the same tack, wanting employment; and so we put our heads together to find out the best way of raising the wind. After some talk, having proposed half a hundred plans, and discovered that none of them were feasible, my companion suddenly cried out, 'If we had but a third we'd go glee-singing.'

"I did not think this a very bad scheme, for Paul had a thundering bass, and I could sing a tolerable second — so we began to talk it over at length, and my partner said, he thought that he

could muster a third — a young lad who had been a voyage or two to the Indies, but was rather tired of ship-board, and longing for something of a change. Well, to make my story short as possible, this younker consented to join us; he had just the sort of voice we wanted, a nice, clear treble, and together we made up a very passable trio of glee-singers.

“It took us a few days to prepare for our undertaking — there was nothing against us but the weather, and that was bitter, for it was the month of November. But to it we went gallantly, and we made it answer even better than we expected. I can’t say much for the fun of it, however, for the night-work was terribly hard, and if it had not been for poor little Beau-pied, who lived pretty comfortably all this time, I don’t think that I could have gone through it all.

“But at length it made me dreadfully ill. The truth is, that I was obliged *to drink* — I could not have gone on without spirits; and what with one thing and another, after a month’s glee-singing, I was floored. I caught a terrible cold — and the cold brought on a fever; and then I was obliged to stay at home. I had saved a little money — for you would hardly believe how much we contrived to get together — we divided our earnings at the end of each week, and a pretty good round

sum we had. But when the fever came, there were no more earnings to divide — my money soon dwindled into nothing — I did not know what to do, so at last I wrote to my mother."

"But your companions," said I, "what became of them? Did they never visit you in your distresses?"

"The sailor-lad came once," replied Lawrence, "God bless him! and divided his purse with me; but never to this very day have I seen any thing more of Paul Phillips."

"*Paul Phillips!*" I exclaimed, starting from my chair as I spoke, "Paul Phillips! and was this the name of your companion?"

Lawrence looked at me wonderingly, and replied, "Yes, sure enough — that was his name. They used to call him Signor Paulo Philosopho in the play-bills, just in the same ridiculous way as they christened me Signor Laurentio."

"But know you where he lives?" I asked, in a voice of extreme eagerness. "Know you where the man is to be found?"

Lawrence stared at me, wondering what was the purport of these questions, and answered, "He used to have a lodging not very far from Shore-ditch Church — I don't know the name of the street, but it was over a spout-shop."

"A spout-shop! and what's that?"

“A pawn-broker’s shop,” returned Lawrence, smiling, as he spoke at my innocence, “and the man’s name who kept it was Jones.”

“Oh ! then I shall easily find him ; but tell me, Lawrence, did this man know that your real name is Moore ?”

“He did not know it at first,” replied Larry, “for I called myself Lawrence in the troop, and I went by that name with my lodging-keeper ; but somehow or other after we became partners in the glee-singing business, I let out my real name, and I remember well that he questioned me about my parents, and hinted that he had known my mother.”

“He did ! Then, as surely as my name is Gerard Doveton, this is the man, whom I have been burning to find.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CURTAIN UP-DRAWN.

How often have we guessed his lineage noble
And now 'tis proved —

• • • • •
These are high tidings—whom does guess his sire?

TALFOURD'S *Ion*.

I ROSE early on the following morning, and joined my uncle Pemberton in one of his accustomed sunrise promenades. As we went along, I took occasion to ask him what he thought of his young guests, and whether he had yet repented of his excessive hospitality.

“Not in the least, Gerard,” said my uncle, “for I know that I have done right. Besides, I have a large house, and why should its rooms be empty? From the mother of these children did I receive, in my young days, a world of kindness. I well remember once when I was lying sick—a young subaltern—with a fever at Gibraltar—that she would supply me every day, with those little comforts which a bachelor’s establishment cannot afford, and that when I was recovering, she would send her carriage to my quarters, that I might take a drive in it, every afternoon. I cannot forget these things, Gerard—I cannot forget that she helped me in my affliction.”

“Oh! uncle, with what truth is it written, ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it will return to thee after many days.’”

“But what think you, uncle,” I added after a pause, “of my friend Michael and his sister?”

“I think that they are as lovely samples of humanity as ever graced this beautiful earth—lovely both in body and in mind. I conversed with Michael yesterday, for several hours, and he delighted, at the same time that he astonished me. How beautiful, nay how grand, is the triumphant rising of innate power above the antagonism of circumstances. In a little sheltered nook, far away from cities, with no preceptor and only a few books, this youth, unaided and alone, has heaped up a

pile of the best knowledge. Gerard, I think that very soon I shall love this boy as a son."

"And Ella?"

"Oh! ask your cousin what *she* thinks of Ella Moore. I don't think that Emily will be very willing to lose her, for already does she love her new companion, as she would love an elder sister, if she had one. And Ella is so modest, so humble, so unassuming—deferring always to Emily, as one wiser and more accomplished than herself, and taking pleasure in contrasting her own ignorance with Emily's knowledge of certain subjects, which must have been mysteries to the cottagers of Grass-hill. I think that any parents might be proud of one so lovely, so graceful, so good, and—indeed I may add, so thoroughly lady-like as Ella.

"And Lawrence?"

"Circumstances must have been strangely against him, or it would be difficult to believe that he has risen from the same parent-stock as Michael and Ella. He is of a different order altogether—he lacks all the gentleness, all the delicacy of sentiment, which distinguishes his brother and sister. But he has been in situations, of all others the most disadvantageous to the progress of refinement. He has been made corrupt by the world."

"He is not what he was when I first knew him—yet, even then he was not comparable to his brother."

“His mind is differently organized. He does not lack high feeling altogether; indeed, there is a generosity of sentiment in his character, which borders very closely upon chivalry. Nothing, for instance, can be more noble than his conduct towards the poor little orphan, whom he has taken under his protection. I honour him and love him for that. Do you know what he purposes to do?”

“He talks about rejoining the players.”

“Oh! no—that will never do, Gerard—we must persuade him to think differently upon the subject; and the most persuasive thing of all others is the offer of some more advantageous situation. We must look about us and see what is to be done—but here come Emily and Ella.”

At breakfast I told the assembled party that I was about to set off for London, as soon as my meal was dispatched. “How very stupid of you,” said my cousin Emily, pouting her full lips as she spoke.

I looked at Ella Moore, and her face wore an aspect of disappointment. It pleased me—for when we are obliged to quit those whom we love, it is pleasant to feel that we shall be missed.

“We hoped that you would have remained with us,” said Ella.

“Yes, you provoking man,” cried my cousin Emily, looking at me with an expression of mock anger, which particularly became her little face;

“Ella and I had thoroughly built upon getting you to take us a walk, and now you are going to that great town. What business can you possibly have there?”

“I will depute Michael to be my substitute,” said I; “for go to that great town I must,” and I thought that if Ella had known upon what I was bound, she would not have wished me to tarry at home.

Just as I had reached the outer gates, I met the postman, who gave me a note; it was from Smith, and very laconic —

“It has just occurred to me over my mutton chop, that if you were to make proper enquiries, you might discover the particular company of the particular battalion of artillery to which Serjeant Moore belonged; and by following up this enquiry you might ascertain how many children he had at the time of his death.

“Yours, at dinner,
“JOHN SMITH.”

“Thank you, John Smith!” I exclaimed, as I thrust his note into my great-coat pocket, “I’ll act up to your advice, if I can’t find Paul Phillips.”

I need scarcely tell the reader, that I was bound for Shoreditch, and at Shoreditch I had safely

arrived, about an hour and a half after leaving the Rectory. With a palpitating heart did I look about me for a pawnbroker's—there were several in the neighbourhood. Uncle-Benjaminship seemed to flourish apace in the respectable vicinity of Shoreditch.

First, I read the name of Abrahams, then of Johnson, then of Middleton, then of Levi—but no Jones. Perhaps Larry had mistaken Johnson for Jones; so I retraced my steps, and made inquiries, but no Paul Phillips lodged in the house; my heart began to sink with despair, for I had walked half-a-mile in either direction, but no broker named Jones was to be found.

So again I started from the Church, determining to thread all the collateral streets, as I had traversed the main thoroughfare. In the first that I scoured, there was no pawnbroker's; in the second, I beheld, at the further extremity thereof, three golden balls, glittering in the sun.

I quickened my pace as I approached them; “Money lent,” in enormous characters, stared me in the face, but I could not perceive the name of the charitable lender. A cloak, and two hats, and a pair of unmentionables pendant from the summit of the door-way, hid the nominative letters from my view.

But presently a most appropriate gust of wind

blew the cloak aside, and I read the name of *Jones*. I entered the house, fluttering with nervous excitement, and stood before the counter of the broker. I was half ashamed of myself, for there were several people in the shop, and it seemed that they were all staring at me. It was so strange that a well-dressed young gentleman should enter a pawnbroker's shop; and I did not at all like it to be supposed that I was raising a loan on my watch.

The pawnbroker thought that he had got a bargain; but I presently undeceived him, asking if one named Phillips lodged in the house.

"Yes, in the front-room, at the top of the house—walk up, Sir; you are sure to be right, if you go till you can go no further, and then look for a door with a crack in it."

"But is he at home?"

"Can't say, Sir—but you'll soon know by rapping at the door."

I did not much like the idea of walking up to the top of a strange house, in a barbarous part of the town, and of entering without any preliminary announcement, the chamber of a vagabond stager. But it was my wont, whenever my heart misgave me, to think of Ella Moore, and whenever I thought of her, I ceased any longer to be a coward.

And so it was, that when I stood before the

“ door with a crack in it,” I felt prodigiously brave ; and I said to myself, “ What does it matter if a legion of Paul Phillipses is in the room ? ”

I rapped, and I was desired to enter. I entered, and looked around me, but I saw no one in the room. There was a curtainless bed in one corner of the apartment, and thrown over it, was a great drugget. Scattered about the floor, were yards of thin printed papers, which looked like halfpenny ballads.

On a broken three-legged table was a fiddle, lacking its proper complement of strings, a basin, and the moiety of a water-jug. Two chairs, one of which was bottomless, a picture of Grimaldi, the clown, a large deal chest, a small heap of clothes, and a black greasy-looking wig completed the contents of the apartment.

But where was Mr. Phillips, himself ? I looked around me, but I saw no one. I advanced into the centre of the room, but still not a creature was visible. A voice, and rather an uncommon one, had certainly desired me to enter ; but whence had the voice proceeded ? There was no other door to the apartment but that whereby I had entered ; no symptom even of a cupboard. I began to think that the voice I had heard was a sound awakened by the imagination, and that the chamber was, in reality, tenantless. What was

I to do in this emergency? Retreat? No, not without another effort to arouse the genius of the place. "Mr. Phillips!" I cried aloud, in a voice which shook the crazy wainscoting.

And a strange, lachrymose voice issued from beneath the drugget on the bed, "Don't talk so loud, or you'll wake me; why, a noise like that might disturb the Seven Sleepers, themselves."

This was certainly a strange reception; but I had conversed with this creature before, and knowing his eccentricities, I was not startled by the novelty of his ways. "Mr. Phillips," I repeated; but "Get along with you," was the only answer I received.

"Is your name Paul Phillips?" I asked, nothing daunted, "and are you the individual, who was lately attached to Mr. Centaur's troop of equestrians?"

And looking towards the bed, I saw the drugget slightly upraised, and from beneath it emerged into sight, first a bare shaven scalp, and then a pair of large, goggle eyes. "Don't you see that I'm fast asleep, Sir?" asked the *ci-devant* clown of the circus.

But as he rolled his great eyes upon me, he thought that they had beheld me before. He looked again—then he put out a hand and removed the drugget from his face. He doubted,

and doubting, he stared at me—then the remembrance of our way-side rencontre flashed upon him, and he suddenly started bolt-upright in his bed. Never was any thing more ridiculous than the aspect of the man, but I was bound on too serious an adventure to feel any propensity to mirth.

“ Oh ! Sir, I beg your honour’s pardon, Sir,” he began, in an obsequious manner, “ I did not know who I was addressing, Sir ; you are the young legal gentleman, I believe, whom I once had the pleasure of conversing with, on the high-road, near Merry-vale, are you not, Sir ? I remember, though it was some time ago, you wanted a next of kin.”

“ Stop a moment, Mr. Phillips, we’ll come to that, presently—your name is Paul Phillips, I take it ?”

“ Ah ! you young gentlemen of the law have such an insinuating way of pumping—cross-examining you call it—that there’s no resisting you. Paul Phillips is my name. I have lately been called Signor Paulo Philosopho—for a name, you know, is every thing to a clown. As plain Paul Phillips, I seldom raised a laugh ; but, as Signor Paulo Philosopho, they roared at me. As plain Paul Phillips all my wisdom was taken for foolery ; but as Signor Paulo Philosopho, all my foolery was taken for wisdom. A name, Sir—

a name is a marvellous ramrod, to stuff an old joke down the throats of the public."

"So it is—so it is, Mr. Phillips; but tell me now have you any recollection of a young man named Lawrence Moore?"

"Oh! a very distinct recollection—a very distinct recollection, indeed. I hope, Sir, that nothing has happened to him; I hope, Sir, that he isn't dead."

"*Dead*—oh! no; I saw him this morning. I am happy to say that he is recovering, rapidly, from the effects of his late fever—no danger, no danger whatever—a fine youth, Mr. Phillips, is this Lawrence Moore—is he not? I think that you were acquainted with his mother—a nice old lady, as ever lived."

"Yes, I *was* acquainted with his mother," said Paul Phillips, and he shuddered as he spoke.

"You knew her, perhaps, in Ireland—by the bye, can you tell me, Mr. Phillips, how many children she had?"

"*Children*, Sir—only that one—only the boy Lawrence."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive,—certain."

"Did you *say* that you knew her in Ireland?"

"May-be, Sir, for there it was that I knew her," and again he shuddered as he spoke.

"Do you feel cold, that you shiver so?" said I.

“No, no; — but I was thinking of something—”

“May I ask, Mr. Phillips, *of what?*”

The retired clown was silent; he shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and assumed a melancholy expression of countenance, which was, in truth, more ludicrous than pathetic. It was evident, that there was something in his mind, which he did not much wish to divulge; but I thought that I knew a golden remedy for silence, and I resolved to make use of it without delay.

“Hark you, Mr. Phillips,” I said, “it is not for a next of kin that I have come hither to-day; but it is about a business, which will more certainly be efficacious in filling your purse. I want to gain all the information that I can, relating to Mrs. Moore—she died a week or two ago, at Merry-vale, and I am raking up the circumstances of her life. You knew her—you acknowledge that you knew her—now, if you will tell me *all* that you know about her, I will give you a five-pound note. Remember that I particularly wish to know what it was that made you shudder—”

“A five-pound note,” said Phillips, musingly, “a five-pound note to tell you all I know about Mrs. Moore—knowledge is scarce, sir,—very—did you say a five-pound or a ten-pound note?”

"A five-pound note, now, Mr. Phillips," I replied, "before you commence your story, and I'll promise you another if what you communicate brings about the consummation I desire."

"That's rather vague and conditional," returned the *ci-devant* clown, "but you look, sir, like one to be trusted too—*fronti nulla fides*, as the Greek poet has written, which means that we may trust to appearances, and your appearances are much in your favour."

I smiled, and taking a bank-note from my purse, proceeded to smooth it upon my knee, whilst I said to Paul Phillips, "Now, sir, if you please, begin with your important history."

Paul stretched out his hand to receive the note, and when he found it safely in his possession, sitting upright in his bed, he commenced his story in the following words.

"My father, sir, was a respectable linendraper—"

But as it happened that I was not particularly anxious to be made acquainted with the history of Mr. Phillips *senior*, and as I was burning with a strong desire to learn all that his son Paul knew relating to the Anstruthers, and the Moores, I interrupted my companion, saying, "If it's not very irregular, Mr. Phillips, we'll come to that point afterwards."

"What, sir, begin at the end?—I *must* begin at the beginning."

“I’m very sorry for it, Mr. Phillips—but couldn’t you begin at the place where you met with Mrs. Moore in Dublin?”

“I might, sir, perhaps, if I tried—but depend upon it, I’ll get over the ground quicker with my own way of telling a story—Well, sir, my father, as I was going to tell you, was a respectable linendraper in Manchester, I was his only son, sir, and my mother—God bless her!—ruined me by the excess of her kindness. I was first of all a pickle in the nursery—they sent me to school, and I was the biggest scamp there—they took me away, and I was the fastest-goer in the town. My father died and left me all his money. I spent it in much less time than it had taken the governor to make it, and I was soon without a penny in the world. Well, sir—”

“But excuse me, Mr. Phillips, if I say it’s not very well. I want to learn something about Mrs. Moore; I’ll hear your own history afterwards.”

“I have just come to that, sir—I never was prosy, and you must have observed that I am labouring to be concise. At three-and-twenty I was an orphan and a beggar—so I enlisted, sir—I enlisted in the artillery, and was in the same company with this Serjeant Moore, whom you are so anxious to learn all about—”

“Proceed!”

“Serjeant Moore had a wife, sir, and one child—I know, never more than one—he was killed

at St. Sebastian, I think — I was not there, for I soon got tired of the army, and an aunt of mine happening to die, left me some money; so I purchased my discharge, and went from one place to another leading a sort of vagabond life, until in Dublin I chanced to alight on Mrs Moore—no, sir, it was not that either—but on board a little smack bound for Liverpool. La, sir, it makes my blood run cold to think of it. I'm sure it's well worth double the money."

Paul shuddered or pretended to shudder, but I took no notice of this manœuvre on his part; but said to him in an eager voice, "And on board this smack do you remember having seen a young married lady with three little children and a maid?"

"Yes—sir, very well, indeed—a beautiful lady she was too —"

"With light hair?"

"Yes, sir, like gold."

"And blue eyes."

"Yes, sir—the bluest I ever saw—though to be sure I did not see much of her."

"And Mrs. Moore was on board the same vessel with this blue-eyed golden-haired lady?"

"Yes—certainly, sir."

"And do you know the lady's name?"

Paul Phillips shook his head negatively.

"But you remember that she had three little children?"

“Quite well, sir : for something happened after this, which made me remember it too surely,”—and again Paul Phillips shuddered.

“And what were these children?”

“What were they, sir?—young children.”

“But boys or girls?”

“Two boys and a girl.”

“And the eldest—do you remember anything particular about the elder boy?”

“Yes, sir, I remember that he was deformed—”

“And now be so good as to proceed; you will earn the promised reward.”

And Paul Phillips thus proceeded: “Well, sir, I was going to tell you that I met Mrs Moore on board the smack, and as I had known her husband and seen her before, we began to talk together as old friends, and I remember that I played with her little boy, a fine child about four years old—this, sir, was before we set sail, for I had gone on board a little before the starting hour—but just as we were getting up our canvass, a lady wrapt up in a large cloak, with a maid and three children, came on board, and after speaking a few words to the captain, they all of them went below. I thought the lady looked frightened and unhappy, but she looked exceedingly beautiful, and I remember her face even now. Well, sir, we put out, and a terrible night it was; I think that I have reason to remember it. A storm came on when

we were in the channel—the Irish channel, you know, sir,—it blew a hurricane—and the thunders roared, and the lightning flashed tremendously—and every soul came on deck, sir,—the women frightened out of their wits—and the men if possible more frightened than the women. I am no sailor, sir, and I know nothing about nautical phrases; but I know that we took down all our sails, and tried to lie to with bare poles, I think they call it—but all this was of no use whatever—the wind blew harder and harder—and our little craft was not particularly sea-worthy. We all had to work at the pumps, for the hold was filling rapidly, and to add to our discomfort, sir, the only boat we had was carried away by a heavy sea, at the very commencement of the storm. Not that it would have been of much use, sir; for no boat could have weathered such a gale; but drowning men will catch at a reed, and it was certain that we were all drowning. Well, sir, the gale increased and with a terrible crash down came our mast—we had but one, for our vessel was only a cutter—and then there was nothing but bustle and confusion upon deck—such screaming and shouting, and swearing—I shall remember it 'till the day of my death, and never think of it without feeling icy cold as I do now, for it was a terrible time, sir. But to cut the story short, our vessel went down, and only Mrs. Moore and I were saved."

"But you have abridged the very part of your story," I exclaimed, in a tone of vexation, "which I am anxious to have most in detail. You say that Mrs. Moore and yourself were the only people saved—did the children all perish with the vessel?"

"No, sir, we saved three children between us—Mrs. Moore's boy, and two of the children belonging to the beautiful lady."

"The lady with the golden hair?"

"Yes, sir —"

"But how did you save them?"

"I really can hardly tell you, sir. I found myself clinging to the mast; but how I got there I have not the least recollection."

"But Mrs. Moore — where was she?"

"Lashed on to the same mast, sir."

"With her child?"

"With three children."

"Then she saved them all?"

"Yes — that is to say — she began the work which I helped her to finish."

"But tell me, Mr. Phillips," I asked, eagerly, "how she accomplished this great and good work."

"I'll tell you, sir, as nearly as I can. When I recovered my senses enough to look about me, I tried to do so; but it was well nigh dark, and I could see nothing at all but an occasional flash of lightning, which helped me to see something

white at the other end of the mast, to which I clung. I cried out, but the wind made such a noise that I suppose I was not heard, or else that the answer returned me was lost ; so thinking in this fearful condition that it would be some small comfort to feel the nearness of some other individual, and hoping besides that we might help one another, I contrived with my hands and knees to scramble, or rather slide, along the mast, till I got to the other end of it, and there I found Mrs. Moore with the three little children."

"But how could she save them all, and yet save herself in this extremity?"

"She had got two of them, sir, in a blanket which she had tied around her in such a manner as to make a sort of hood behind her, and in this two of the children lay snugly as in a great bag, with their little arms round Mrs. Moore's neck. The other child — *her own*, she held in her hands, and she herself was lashed to the mast."

"And I suppose that you took one of the children from her."

"Yes, sir — she gave me the lady's little boy, and intreated me to take charge of him. I did so ; and the little boy was saved."

"You were taken up by some other vessel."

"Yes, sir — by a Liverpool trader, bound to the West Indies : they carried us on to Jamaica, and I did my best to make myself useful ; but I was

never cut out for a sailor, so I did not make much hand of it on board, except once or twice in the gunnery line, when we fell in with — ”

“ Oh ! never mind that ! did Mrs. Moore ever tell you how she came to save Mrs. Anstruther’s children ? ”

“ Whose children, sir ? ” asked Paul Phillips, eagerly.

“ The children of the blue-eyed lady,” I answered, recollecting myself suddenly.

Paul Phillips eyed me with a cunning look, and then answered, “ Yes, sir — she told me that, in the midst of the terrible confusion, when all on board knew that they were sinking, just before the vessel went down, she lashed herself to the broken mast which was lying athwart the deck, and part of it hanging over the water.”

“ Go on — go on, I pray. She then had her own child in her arms ? ”

“ Yes, sir — and she remembered that as the vessel was sinking, a lady — *the* lady — with a blanket wrapt round her — her yellow hair streaming down her back, — one child in her arms, and two children clinging to her knees, cried out, imploring Mrs. Moore, for the love of Heaven to save her children.”

“ And Mrs. Moore took them.”

“ I remember she told me that she scarcely knew how it was done ; but she thinks that the

lady, who was almost wild with terror, took the blanket which she had wrapped round her from her shoulders, and spreading it out, tied two of her children to Mrs. Moore's back, and then endeavoured to lash herself and her other little boy on to the mast beside them. But she had not time to accomplish this — the vessel went down, and she perished."

"And how long did you remain at Jamaica?"

"About three months."

"And Mrs. Moore returned in the same vessel?"

"She did."

"And she kept the children?"

"Yes, and brought them up like her own."

"Did she ever try to discover the father of the children?"

"I think she did — but as we were the only survivors, she did not well know from whom to inquire. She put advertisements into the Dublin papers, but I suppose that they were never answered."

I thought this at first very strange, but I remembered afterwards that Anstruther had gone abroad immediately upon the loss of his wife, and that for some years no tidings were heard of him at home, until it was supposed by his friends that he was dead.

When this occurred to me, I ceased to wonder; and I presently continued my interrogatories.

“Do you know, Mr. Phillips, whether any property was saved out of the wreck?”

“No — and yet I am not quite right in saying so; for some how or other Mrs. Moore escaped with a jewel-box belonging to the lady, whose two children she saved.”

“How came she with it?”

“It was tied up in a corner of the blanket, which the lady wrapped round her children.”

“And can you remember the contents of the box?”

“Yes; I think so — at least I am certain that there was a miniature in it, and a little book — which I thought was somewhat strange.”

“And at this distance do you think that you could identify the box?”

“Hardly; for I only saw it once. I was present when Mrs. Moore opened it for the first time, but I never set eyes on it afterwards; however, I am quite sure that there was a miniature in it and a little book, but I cannot speak certainly to anything else — though I take it, there were earrings and necklaces, and other such gew-gaws in the case.”

“Should you know the picture if you were to see it again?”

“Hardly; it was the portrait of a gentleman — but I cannot answer for anything else.”

"It does not much signify, however — Mr. Phillips, you are sure of your reward."

The eyes of the *ci-devant* clown glistened with delight, and he rubbed together the palms of his hands. "I'm 'nation glad to hear it," he replied, "for I'm desperate low in my finances, and I've got a terrible idle fit upon me — mightily disinclined to work."

"You will make affidavit of these statements, I take it for granted," said I.

"Oh! yes; I will kiss the Bible to all I have told you, sir — and write it down on paper if you like."

"You will have no objection, I suppose, to come with me before a magistrate — or at some future period to give evidence in a court of law."

"Court of law, sir! I can't say that I much like to go into a court of law. 'Tisn't the Old Bailey, is it?" And Paul Phillips shuddered, as though certain unpleasant reminiscences had been awakened in his mind.

"Oh! no — a civil, not a criminal court —"

"They aren't generally over civil," said Paul Phillips, with a melancholy smile.

"But you will do all this for a consideration—"

"For a consideration, almost anything, sir—"

"Nay, nothing but to speak the truth. Come, now; there's no time like the present. I will take

down your evidence now, and then we will go before a magistrate. But one more question, Mr. Phillips — do you think that you remember the face of the blue-eyed lady sufficiently to recognize her picture if you were to see it.”

“I think so; ’twasn’t a face which one would very easily forget.”

“Good ! now we’ll send for some paper.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MIST DISPERSED.

"Most true; if ever truth were pregnant with circumstance; that which you hear you'll swear you see, there is such unity in the proofs. The mantle of queen Hermione,—her jewel 'bout the neck of it,—the letters of Antigonus, found with it, which they know to be his character,—the majesty of the creature in resemblance to her mother,—the affection of nobleness, which nature shows above her breeding,—and many other evidences proclaim her, with all certainty, to be the king's daughter."

SHAKESPEARE.

"WELL; I think that you have made out your case very clearly," said my uncle Pemberton to me, on the morning after my interview with Paul Phillips, "there can no longer be any doubt, I think, that Michael and Ella Moore are the children of your friend, Mr. Anstruther."

"Oh! uncle, I am so glad that you think so."

I myself have been long convinced of this, though every now and then I have had my misgivings, knowing that my creative imagination is but too prone to lead me astray."

"But the imagination does not always lead us to false conclusions," returned my uncle, "and the impulses of fancy direct us into the paths of truth almost as often as do the reasonings of common sense. You will have your reward, Gerard,—after long travail, you will have your reward."

"I *am* rewarded, uncle, already—oh! never have I been so happy as now. I feel that I have done something—that I have laboured to some purpose—that I shall now be able to repay the debt of gratitude that I owe to Mr. Anstruther. Oh! I am so anxious to acquaint him with my discovery—I burn to disclose the secret."

"But you must not be precipitate, Gerard."

"Precipitate!—there can no longer be any doubt. I have a train of evidence, rendering all things certain."

"You have—but is Mr. Anstruther in a fit state to receive these tidings?"

"Oh! uncle, trust to my caution—"

"Your caution!" and Mr. Pemberton smiled a good-natured smile of significance.

"Don't you think it advisable then, uncle, that I should set out for Charlton Abbey to-night?"

My uncle made no answer, for some minutes ; he looked thoughtful, and then at length he replied, " You said something to me, the other day, about Mr. Anstruther desiring to see me."

" I did, uncle—he is broken down, in body and in mind ; he thinks that he is dying, and he desires to see you."

" Dying !"

" He thinks so—but the tone of his mind is desponding over-much. I am sure that he has many years to live, for the glad tidings, of which I am the bearer, will be to him a medicine more health-bearing than any the physician can supply."

" But, like other powerful medicines, Gerard, it must be administered with the utmost caution. I will help you, my dear boy. I will do all in my power, to bring about that which you desire. You shall set out for Charlton Abbey to-night, and be the bearer of an invitation from me to your friend, Mr. Anstruther."

" What ! asking him to live with you here?"

" Yes, Gerard, there is still room in the rectory for another inmate. You say, that from my lips he desires to receive the spiritual advice, of which he stands so much in need. Shall I deny him this ? Oh ! no, Gerard ; to such as he is, my doors are ever open. Shall I refuse the broken and the contrite sinner, when the Almighty himself is ever ready to welcome him?"

“ Then, I will set out for Charlton Abbey to-night.”

“ Yes, Gerard ; but I scarcely know how to trust you. Some sudden impulse will urge you to reveal your great secret at once. Be guarded. Such tidings as these must be gradually communicated to the sufferer. Who would think of exposing to the glare of a mid-day sun a man, who, after long years of blindness, has just been restored to sight ? Gerard, a sudden revelation of this nature might be the death of Mr. Anstruther at once.”

“ Trust me, uncle ; for once in my life I will restrain the impulses of my nature. But the children—Michael and Ella ; may I not tell them of what I have discovered ?”

“ After all that you have done, Gerard, no pleasure arising out of your good work ought to be denied to you, and I see no reason why you should not tell Michael and Ella. There is Michael coming towards us ; it yet wants half an hour of prayer-time ; go you and take a walk with him, —then tell the boy all that you know.”

I obeyed the injunctions of my uncle. Passing my arm through Michael's, I led him into one of the shrubbery walks, and began by making some very common-place remarks, concerning the weather.

I knew that Michael would enter upon the subject nearest his heart, so I left him to commence the interesting conversation. We had not conversed together in private, since the evening on which he had visited me in my chamber, and been interrupted by the entrance of Lawrence. I was not wrong; after a few desultory remarks, he said to me, in an earnest tone, "Oh! Gerard, I have been longing to speak to you, alone; for, I am sure that you know more than you will tell me, relating to the history of my birth."

I was silent, and Michael, laying his hand upon my arm, and suddenly halting as he spoke, cried out in impetuous accents, "You *do* know, Gerard, so tell me, I beseech you—you do know, and it is cruel thus to torment me."

"Have you the miniature, Michael!" said I, in a meek voice, and I looked kindly at my friend.

"Yes, round my neck—it is my father's picture, and I am sure that you know his name."

"*I do.*"

"Then, for the love of Heaven, tell me, Gerard, whose picture it is."

"I will—it is Mr. Anstruther's portrait!"

"Mr. Anstruther's!—your friend, Mr. Anstruther's! Gerard, you are not making a mock of me. They say that the face is like mine, and this

picture was found in the possession of one reputed my mother. Ha! is it possible then?"—and he clasped his forehead with one of his hands, as though he were endeavouring to collect his distracted thoughts; "is it possible, then, that Mrs. Kirby?—no, no; if Mr. Anstruther be my father—I am not, I cannot be her child."

"They never met; they never beheld one another."

"Then I am not a child of shame."

"No, Michael."

"And yet, the son of Mr. Anstruther."

"That portrait is assuredly his."

"But, Gerard, you know more than this; by the love which you have ever borne toward me—by the love which you bear towards Ella—I intreat, I conjure you to speak out, and to conceal no tittle of the knowledge which you possess, relating to me and my parentage. Gerard, you are kind and good, you would not torture me, I am sure."

"Not for the world, Michael—listen then, and I will tell you all I know. Oh! my friend, how hard have I laboured to elicit the strange truths, which now I am about to reveal to you; and at length have I reaped the harvest of my desires. I *do* know, Michael, who you are. I do know who are your parents;" and then briefly, but distinctly as possible, I laid before him the chain of

evidence, which proved him to be the son and heir of Mr. Anstruther.

Michael stood still, as I spoke, leaning heavily on my arm all the while. He turned his face towards mine, but moved not; there was a rigid look in his face, and his eyes wore a fixed appearance, as though they gazed but beheld nothing. Ever and anon there was a slight convulsive motion of his nether lip, which was the only life-like manifestation, which his marble features betrayed. When I ceased to speak, he stretched out his arms, threw them suddenly around my neck, and laying his head upon my shoulder, hysterically he sobbed aloud.

We mingled our tears together, for my eyes rained plentifully. I wept partly from sympathy, and partly from excess of joy.

Silently we turned towards the rectory. I cannot write what Michael Moore said to me before we crossed the threshold of the house.

But to Ella, still was this history unknown.—

Let it not be thought, because in the latter pages of this book, I have said but little of the great love, which I bore towards Ella Moore, that my affection diminished as I advanced in years, or that I was in any wise a cold-blooded lover. I have *said* very little about my love, thinking that the *actions*, which I have recorded, must have expressed it plainly enough. All my doings

were manifestations of this love. I lived, toiled, struggled, endured, only for love. They who cannot trace the mainsprings of all my actions must, indeed, be wilfully blind.

I was left alone with Ella, on that morning. Seating myself beside the beloved one, I took her little hand into mine, and looking upon it smilingly, I said, "Ella, methinks that this small white hand is an index of high birth."

Ella blushed; and then, looking into my face, she said, with a sweet smile, though her face wore a thoughtful aspect, "Often does an index indicate falsely. There is no rule without an exception."

"Oh! but small white hands are very certain tests of aristocracy. Napoleon, and Byron, and Ali Pacha, have all been of this opinion."

"A trick of their self-love," returned Ella. "I dare say, that they had white hands, themselves."

"But tell me now, Ella; would it make you happy, if it were proved, beyond all doubt, that you are the daughter of a great man?"

"I am an orphan," returned Ella, thoughtfully.

"And, therefore, you could not grieve to find that you have a parent living."

Ella cast down her eyes, but answered not, and

I continued, "Methinks, you would change a dead parent for a living one. Better to rejoice over a treasure found, than to grieve over one lost."

"I do not understand you," said Ella.

"Do you ever attempt to look into the future—do you ever speculate upon your probable destiny?"

"Michael and I together have talked over our plans; but as yet we have made no definite arrangements. Sir Reginald has promised to get him employment, and wherever he goes, I will go—his home will be my home, and his people my people."

"But you will not dwell with him all your life long—"

"And why not?" asked Ella, looking up into my face with an expression of beautiful simplicity.

"Because, peradventure, you might find another friend, with whom you would rather live all your days, than with Michael."

"What other friend, Gerard? I think that I must be very dull this morning, for I do not understand half of what you say."

"Perhaps, it is that I am obscure. But, tell me, is there no one in the world, whom you love even better than Michael?"

Ella spoke not; but the blush, which my question elicited, was an answer more significant than words.

"Tell me, Ella," and I took her hand into

mine, "is there no one whom you love better than Michael?"

"I am fatherless and motherless," said Ella.

"But the love of kindred is not always the strongest — Ella, dear Ella!" and passed my arm around her waist: "is there no one beside your brother, whom you would be content to live with to the end of your days?"

Ella answered not; her head drooped, and slightly her frame trembled.

"Do not be angry with me, Ella, for asking you these strange questions. Indeed, indeed, I am not sporting with you. Tell me, my sweet girl, is your brother Michael dearer to you than all the world beside? Is there no one for whose sake you would leave him? Is there no one dearer to you than Michael?" And as I said this, I drew the young maiden closer to my side, and bending down, I looked into her eyes with an expression of supplicating fondness.

Ella lifted up her head, and silently she turned her face towards me — oh! such a look of tenderness and love was there. I no longer desired that she should speak.

She laid her head upon my shoulder, and the only word that she uttered was "Gerard!"

We were happy — but for a few brief minutes. Such joy as this could not last. The dream was

soon over; and Ella Moore was the first to awake into consciousness.

Suddenly she withdrew herself from my embraces. "Gerard," she said in a decisive tone of voice, with a supernatural effort of strength collecting all the powers of her mind, to aid her in this extremity, "Gerard, this must not—this ought not to be. We can never be to one another more than we are now—already I fear that we are too much. Forgive me that I have ever dared to regard you with any other feelings than of humble respect and gratitude. You are far above me in rank, education, riches, everything—I am fit only to be the handmaid of such as you are. I am nothing but a poor cottage girl, and I am not so selfish as to desire that you should demean yourself by thinking of me as being any other than a lowly dependent upon your bounty. I know that you are generous and devoted—I know that you would willingly set aside what the world calls the distinctions of society; but I love you too well to suffer this sacrifice to be made on my account. We had better part—we had better dwell asunder. It is decreed that we are to move in different spheres—Michael will labour for me, and protect me—we are not ever likely to cross one another in the paths of life. A few days will divide us for ever. Forget that you have ever known me. My prayers will

ever be lifted up for your safety — my blessing will ever be upon your head. Forgive me, that I have spoken thus plainly — I fear that my words have caused you anguish ; but believe me that I have no other desire but the advancement of your happiness and welfare. Mr. Doveton, it would be better for us both that I should leave this place with all speed — it would be better —” but she could utter not one word more. She had no longer any strength to support her. The trial was too great — it was an effort beyond her nature that she was struggling to make. She could not subdue her rising emotions — they overcame her thoroughly at last, and hiding her face between her hands she burst into a paroxysm of tears.

Then presently she rose from her seat, and moved towards the door ; I followed her, and gently taking her by the hand, I prevented her sudden retreat. “ Yet, stay, Ella — but a few words more ere we part — sit down and dry your tears, for that which has caused them to flow so plentifully exists but in your own mind. Ella you are my equal, and more than my equal. What was that you told me in the spring, about the cushions of green velvet ?”

“ A foolish fancy of mine,” said Ella, dashing away her tears as she spoke.

“ Nay, Ella, it was no foolish fancy, but a remembrance of that which once was — of a time

when you were a dweller in a splendid mansion — a child born to wealth and station. Ella, did I not tell you when we parted upon the green hill behind your cottage, that I would put forth my whole strength in the endeavour to clear up this strange mystery? I have kept my promise — I have laboured diligently, and a great success has attended my labours. Now, sweetest, listen to what I have to tell you. Already does Michael know the truth. You are neither an orphan nor a cottage maiden — but the daughter of Mr. Anstruther — my friend.”

* * * * *

That evening I set out for Charlton Abbey; and Ella kissed me on the forehead ere I went.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WRETCHED END OF THE IDOLATER.

I doubt my body
Will hardly serve me through ; while I have laboured,
It has decayed ; and now that I demand
Its best assistance, it will crumble fast—
A sad thought—a sad fate.

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

I'll give thee proofs,
.... Great God, I thank thee—proofs !
Are there not here the lineaments of her
Who made me happy once—the voice, now still,
That bade the long-sealed fount of love gush out—
It is my child !

TALFOURD'S *Ion*.

“How feel you now, Edwin?” I asked, as I sate by Anstruther's bed-side, in my uncle's house, a few days after the occurrence of the events detailed in the last chapter.

"I feel, Gerard, as a man may feel who has not many days to live. That journey was too much for me—but what does it matter? Methinks, I have lived too long already—too long in rebellion against God."

"But now——"

"Yes, ~~now~~, Gerard, I have submitted myself meekly to His will. I bow down humbly at His footstool, and kiss the hand that has smitten me——"

"And like the Shunamite woman——"

"I am ready to say *It is well.*"

"Be sure that God will reward you."

"But not as she of old was rewarded."

"How know you, Edwin?—such things have been ere now."

"That the sea has given up its dead? Folly! but peradventure I may go unto them, although they cannot come unto me."

Then after a pause he continued, "I have just had a sweet dream, Gerard—a sweet dream of peace. I was sitting in a fair country, with my wife and my three children, and my elder boy was no longer deformed, but beautiful as his brother and sister. And you were there too, Gerard, with *your* bride, and she was like unto mine——" Then breaking off suddenly, he asked, in an altered tone of voice, "Gerard, do you remember the day when

you showed me the picture of your beloved Ella, and I was so strangely affected by the sight."

"Oh! well—very well indeed, Edwin."

"Now, I will tell you, for there is no reason why I should conceal any thing from you. I will tell you that the picture, both in line and colour, bore so strange a resemblance to my poor saint-like wife, now in heaven, that I could almost have taken it for her own portrait, and this it was that excited me so much. Gerard, I have a strange desire to see your beloved Ella. Where is she? Can I look upon her ere I die?"

"You can."

"'Tis a foolish wish—but perhaps it will be my last. Did you say that the Moores are in Devonshire?"

"Not now—their mother is dead, and being orphans, my uncle has received them into his house. They are dwelling now beneath this very roof."

"Ha!—beneath this very roof."

"Yes; and both Michael and Ella looked upon you last night, as you slept."

"Looked upon me? Came they into my chamber?"

"Yes, Edwin—but only for a minute."

"And why were they so anxious to see me?"

I knew not what to say. I could not speak the truth, and answer, "That they might look upon the face of their parent."

I hesitated, and after a little while, I replied, "They desired to behold the man of whom I had spoken to them so often, and who has been to me more than a father."

"Then you will bring Ella to see me again?"

"I will,"—and oh! how I longed to add, "For she is your long-lost daughter."

But I restrained myself; and yet I knew not how to act in this most painful emergency. It was, alas! but too plain to me that Anstruther was dying, and that in all human probability, a few more days would complete the sum of his existence. I had found him at Charlton Abbey, in a wretchedly debilitated condition; he had eagerly accepted my uncle's invitation; but the journey, though we were two days upon the road, had been too much for him, and when he arrived at the rectory, he was in a state of such entire exhaustion, that it was found necessary to convey him immediately to his chamber, and lay him upon the bed, from which it was but little likely he would ever be able to rise. What then was to be done? I was sore afraid that a sudden shock would kill him outright; and yet I could not suffer him to die in ignorance of my great discovery. Perhaps—yet the chance was very small—the knowledge,

which I had to impart to him, might eventually prove his salvation; but it was far more probable that the result of such a disclosure would be fatal to him; for the lamp of life was flickering, and the slightest current of air would have been sufficient to extinguish it altogether.

And alas! I had arrived too late with pardon to the condemned criminal. But a few months sooner, and I might have seen the consummation of all my fondest desires, and stood upon the very pinnacle of human happiness, looking down upon the fair work that I had accomplished. But now—oh! it wrung my heart to think that what I had done would be productive of more wretchedness than bliss—that after all my labours, all my struggles, all my sufferings, for the sake of others, I was doomed to be the cause of a world of anguish, which but for me never would have been. That which I desired to do I had done, but the success which had crowned my endeavours was fraught with agony, and not with delight. Failure would have been better than such success—success coming a little too late.

Such were the thoughts that came over me, causing my heart to sink, as I sate silently by Anstruther's bed-side, after uttering the two last monosyllables.

I knew not what to do; whichever way I looked despair was staring me in the face.

But Anstruther, turning his wan face towards me, and laying his thin, cold hand upon mine, broke through the silence, saying, "When will you bring her to me, Gerard—when will you bring Ella Moore?"

I could not bear it—this dreadful state of suspense and incertitude, and this necessity of constant equivocation, were insupportable to me; better any thing than this—better any thing than this mixture of doubt and fear, tearing my heart to pieces. I could not conceal the truth any longer; and I resolved to disclose all that I knew.

And yet I saw the necessity of acting with extreme caution, for a sudden revelation would have been too much for Anstruther. Impetuous as I was by nature, and thorough-going as were all my actions, I did not so far commit myself on this occasion, as to burst suddenly upon my friend with the strange disclosure I was about to make to him. I knew that I must lead him step by step to this knowledge. I knew that the light which I was about to shed upon his mental vision must be suffered to dawn gradually upon him, not to blaze forth at once, in its full meridian brightness. But I was not a practised tactician, and I found myself in a painful embarrassment.

"When shall I see Ella Moore?" asked An-

struther; "when shall I see this living portrait of my beloved one in the heavens?"

"Oh! soon — very soon, dear Edwin—in a little time I will bring her to you. How I wish that you had known her before, for, I am sure that you would have loved her as your daughter. Yes — though she has dwelt all her life in a cottage, she is even fit to be *your* daughter. She is not what she seems, I am sure. I scarcely think that she can be the daughter of the widow-woman, who brought her up in this lowly way of life. There is some strange mystery enveloping her birth. When the mother died — I mean Mrs. Moore — when Mrs. Moore died, there was found a box of jewels amongst her effects, with a portrait — a miniature of a gentleman——"

"A box of jewels, with a miniature! — but I will not interrupt you; go on with your story, Gerard — go on with your story, I beseech you."

"Nay, Edwin—not if it is to excite you thus—it is not good for you, that you should be excited."

"Excited! I am not excited, Gerard—I am calm, I never was calmer."

I laid my fingers upon his wrist, and his pulses galloped. "The tell-tale blood belies you, Edwin."

“Go on, Gerard — I am only feverish with curiosity—allay that, and the fever will be allayed — what were you going to say about the miniature?”

“That it was the portrait of a gentleman about four-and-twenty — and strange to say that it is something like you.”

“Like me! and is the picture in the house?” gasped Anstruther, “like me! can you get possession of the picture?”

“Pray compose yourself — this excitement is dangerous above all things. I wish that I had not told you this.”

“But as you have begun, so you must finish — I am not excited in the least — but if any thing can excite a man, it is curiosity — tell me all, and I shall become calm as a lake in summer — what more do you know about this miniature?”

“Nothing more than that the picture is like you.”

“Bring it to me, Gerard, I beseech you,—bring me the picture that I may look upon it.”

“But why are you so anxious to see it?”

“I will tell you, Gerard — when my poor Mary perished in the great waters, she had in her possession a portrait — a miniature portrait of myself. Methinks I should know it if I were to see the picture — so bring me that of which you speak.”

"But what if it should be the identical picture — property has been often saved from a wreck."

"And persons too — such things have been ere now — oh! Gerard, you have awakened within me hopes, which until this very moment I have never ventured to encourage — it may be that they did not all perish — but bring the picture that I may look upon it."

"*There* — it now hangs around my neck — Edwin is this your picture?"

I put the miniature into the sick man's hand — he needed not to look at it a second time, for the first glance was sufficient to assure him that he had often beheld it before. Grasping the picture convulsively, and sinking back on his pillow, he cried out, in a choking voice, "It is, Gerard, it is! Assuredly as I am a miserable sinner, I gave this picture to Mary Penruddock."

Then, after a little while, sitting upright in his bed, and making a mighty effort to compose himself, he said to me in a voice of assumed calmness, enunciating each word slowly and distinctly, "Gerard, you knew Mrs. Moore very well — bore she any likeness to Ella?"

"None whatever."

"And her eyes?"

"Were hazel — her hair dark —"

"Enough — enough. I knew her not. But how could I ever have been so mad as to en-

courage a hope so monstrous. Yet stranger things have happened than this — the girl, at least the picture of the girl is the very image of my wife — and the boy, Michael I think you called him, what is he like ?”

“Something like your picture — ”

“Ha ! like my picture — a singular coincidence — but stranger things have happened ere now. Do not think that I am excited in the least ; I feel so calm and so strong, that I do not think a thunderbolt falling at my feet would have power to make me tremble. Go on, Gerard — there are two boys, I think you said — Michael is the younger — but the elder youth, I forget his name. Is he — is he — a *hunch-back* ?”

“He is tall and comely, and beautifully proportioned — ”

“But, Michael, you say is like me — what age is he ?”

“Nineteen.”

“And Ella ?”

“A year younger than her brother.”

“The ages tally — ’tis a wonderful coincidence, but more wondrous things have come to pass than this. I am weak, and foolish, and credulous in my infirmities. I am scarcely right-minded, perhaps, — now do not laugh at me, Gerard, for asking you this strange question ; but tell me, and I adjure you solemnly to let your answer be nothing

but the truth — tell me now, has it ever entered into your thoughts, have you ever had the slightest shadow of suspicion, that Michael and Ella Moore might possibly be my long-lost children? I know that I must appear very ridiculous for indulging in such a wild chimæra — but some how or other this idea has possessed me, and foolish as is my question, I implore you to answer. Speak now, as though you were, as indeed you *are*, in the presence of the Most High Judge. You see how calm I am, Gerard — so do not fear that your answer will excite me. Have you ever had the least shadow of a suspicion that Michael and Ella Moore might possibly be my long-lost children?"

Thus invoked, what else could I do but answer, "Yes, Edwin, *I have.*"

"You have!" and now Anstruther spoke in a more rapid and less distinct voice, "you have — you confess you have suspected — now tell me, *why* have you suspected?"

"My imagination is very fertile," I answered, "and in my mind a possibility is soon magnified into a probability — a probability into a conviction. The likeness of Ella to your wife, and of Michael to yourself, together with their possession of your miniature does furnish a chain — though a very slender one — a chain of presumptive evidence. Besides this, Michael tells me that he

distinctly remembers in his early childhood a great storm at sea."

"More proof! — more proof! — the light is beginning to dawn upon me, I doubt not but that it will blaze forth anon. Bring them to me, Gerard, for methinks that there is a strong instinct within us which teacheth us to know our own children. If they be mine I doubt not but that I shall know them — bring them to me, or reveal at once all the hidden knowledge, which lies darkly within you, for I am as certain as I am of my own wickedness, that you know much more than you are willing to reveal. Do not be afraid of exciting me — I can bear any thing — any thing that you can tell me. Whatever you say, Gerard, will no more affect me than the wind does a frozen lake."

"Edwin, was the name of the vessel, which went down with your children, the *Emerald*?"

"It was — it was," gasped Anstruther, "how knew you this, Gerard? I told you not — I told you not the name of the vessel."

"No; but I once knew a man, who was on board of it —"

"A man who was on board the *Emerald* when she perished?" asked Anstruther, with an energy which he could not control, for he was in a fever of perilous excitement.

"Yes," I answered, "he was saved. Providence watched over him, and he was saved."

"Alone — escaped he alone?"

"No — not alone — with him a woman and three little children."

"And the woman?"

"Was Mrs. Moore!"

"Merciful God, I thank thee! Then I am not a childless man."

He sunk back with his head upon the pillow, and his hands clasped across his breast. And thus he lay for some minutes supine and motionless; his lips alone moving a little.

I thought that the wretched man was praying, so I did not utter a word.

But presently he turned his face towards me, and said, in a low voice, "You are not making a mock of me, I hope."

"God forbid, Edwin, that I should be so cruel a tormentor. I have with me an affidavit made by this very man. I did not tell you all I knew at once, thinking that it would be too much for you — but I have proof, clear and decisive, beyond all shadow of doubt. Michael and Ella are the children of your loins! Have you strength to listen to what I can read to you — the statements in this paper? I fear that already you are exhausted — you had better try and compose yourself to sleep."

"Sleep, Gerard! Do you think that I could

sleep — with my children — my long-lost children beneath the roof, and I not yet having seen them — not yet having pressed them to my bosom ! No, no — Gerard, read that paper — let me know, beyond all question, that my children are living — prove it to me incontestably, and then bring them to me that I may bless them.”

And in a voice as clear and distinct as I could summon to my assistance, I read the eventful deposition of Paul Phillips to the end.

Anstruther interrupted me not. He turned his ace towards me, and it was pale and rigid as white marble ; his eyes were fixed intently upon me ; his lips pressed closely together ; his hands clutched the coverlid of the bed.

He spoke not — he moved not, whilst I read, and when I had done reading, he changed not his position for some minutes, and I thought that he was senseless. But anon he raised his hand to his forehead, and faintly articulated, “Is that all?”

“I have read the deposition to the end.”

“And it is signed — attested upon oath — made before a Justice of the Peace?”

“It is — ”

“Then bring me my children,” and the sick man’s voice was loud and exceeding shrill, “bring me my children that I may bless them ! And hark you, Gerard, do not say that I am dying — but send directly for *** and *** and *** , all the first

physicians in London — tell them that I have mines of wealth, and that they shall have all if they can but save me. I must not, I *will* not die yet — to die *now*, oh ! horrible, Gerard — to think that my bark, after braving many tempests, should go down in the very sight of home — God ! merciful God ! for their sakes spare me, I implore you — suffer me yet a little while to live, for *their* sakes, not for my own — they are good and holy, and pure, and innocent, they have not bowed down to idols. I ask as one deserving nothing — but God is merciful, and I am sore-stricken. — Oh ! any thing but this — any thing but death at this moment. I ask but for life — let it be a life of pain, poverty, disease — let me live a leper — only let me live, and I will — fool that I am to think of bargaining with the Most High !

“ But why sit you there ? ” continued the sick man, raising his voice to a still higher tone, “ why sit you there ? do you hear me not ? Bring me my children, Gerard ; I say, bring me my children. For fifteen years I have been as a childless man, and now God has given me back my children. Bring them to me, Gerard ; for my time is short — I cannot spare a minute of this great happiness — the joy of looking upon my children. But hark you, do not say that I am dying — I am not dying — no, no — it is impossible that I should

DOVETON.

die at the threshold — the very threshold of sweet home."

I left the sick-chamber with a quaking heart and hurried immediately to my uncle. Rapid told him of all that had past between Anstruther and myself. The tears glistened in Mr. Pemberton's eyes, as he said to me, "The father must be obeyed — we can keep him no longer from his children."

Together my Uncle Pemberton and I went to prepare Michael and Ella for the interview. They were sitting side by side, and Michael was endeavouring to allay the fears of his sister — whispering words of hope into her ear, though his heart misgave him all the time.

My uncle repaired to Anstruther's chamber, desiring us to follow him in a few minutes. He went thither hoping to strengthen the dying man with the sweet medicine of prayer. I sat down beside Ella and said, "Fear not;" but Ella trembled from head to foot. Michael's face too was pale as a spectre's. The few minutes, that we waited below, appeared to us like so many hours.

But at length the time passed, and I led Michael and Ella to the chamber of their dying parent. My hand shook like the hand of a palsy-stricken man as I laid it upon the handle of the door.

We entered—Anstruther would have sprung from his bed, but that the strong arm of my uncle restrained him, “My children! my long lost children!” he cried aloud in a shrill voice, “I implore you, not to keep me from my children,” and sitting upright in his bed, he stretched out his lean arms.

Michael and Ella rushed towards the bed, and in a moment they were in the embrace of their father. First one and then the other he kissed with frantic energy. He pressed them to his bosom; then he gazed at them passionately; he laughed, and he wept aloud. Then he kissed them again and again, and passed his fingers through their hair, and ever anon uttered such broken sentences as these.

“My children—my long lost children—my Edwin—yes, your name is Edwin—not Michael—and your name is Mary—yes, Mary—your mother’s name was Mary—and you have your mother’s face. There now, my sweet child—look up, for I would gaze upon your face—you have blue eyes and golden hair like your mother—you are weeping—nay, don’t weep—laugh, laugh as I do—you ought to rejoice for you have found a parent—as I rejoice having found my children, my long-lost, beautiful children. Oh! I am so proud of you—how lovely you are both. We will be so happy, so happy, Edwin. I have a fine

house and beautiful gardens, and we will have such merry-making at the Abbey—we will have bonfires and illuminations, and fire-works—and prayers too, prayers, Mary—thanksgivings, for God is merciful. He has given me back my children, and we must not forget Him—we must not be ungrateful to God. And, Gerard too—where is Gerard?—Mary, you love Gerard—we shall have ‘points and bride-laces’ anon—ha, ha!—we will have such doings at the Abbey—now kiss me, my sweet Mary—and do not hide your beautiful face. Proofs indeed! oaths and affidavits!—you are the very image of the mother—I should have known you any where as my child—the parental instinct is strong.—But speak to me—why are you silent? lift up your voice, Mary—I wish to hear the music of your voice.”

But all that the young maiden could say was “Father!—my dear father!”

“Ah! that voice! I should have known it in a chorus of a thousand—it is the same sweet voice that gladdened me with its music in the summer of my youth. Can you sing, Mary? Your mother used to sing to me, and you shall sing to me—oh! how happy we shall be! But, hark ye, my sweet children, we must not love overmuch. God is a jealous God, and idolatry is a grievous sin—I have a great pain about my heart, and there is something burning me, like a fire, in my

brain — but I am not ill, you must not think that I am ill; I shall live to a good old age, for God has given me back my children, and I am no longer a solitary man. Gerard, give me some wine, you know it is my old medicine, besides, I must drink to my children — you will not — why you think that I am ill — I feel strong as a giant, and I shall come down to dinner to-day.”

But the sick man, though he boasted of his strength, was utterly exhausted, and slowly and faintly his words came forth. He sunk back, with his head upon the pillow, but he still held Ella by the hand. There had been an unnatural brilliancy in his eyes, but now they were dim and glassy; there had been a hectic flush on his cheeks, but now they were utterly hueless. Everything betokened approaching death — the supernatural energy which had supported him was gone, and he now lay weak and powerless upon the bed, scarcely able to uplift his hand.

But still he continued to speak, though his voice was exceedingly low, “I wish that you would give me some wine — I wish that you had given it to me when I asked for it, for I am weak now, very weak for the want of it. My sweet Mary, give me a kiss, and raise those pillows behind me, for I cannot see you whilst I am lying thus — that will do, yet now I can scarcely see you — perhaps it is that my eyes have become dim — come nearer

to me, still nearer, and you Edwin — there now I feel you both — Mr. Pemberton, we must not forget God, it would be well for us all if we prayed."

* * * * *

* * * * *

"Can you hear what I am saying? — now, my sweet children, pray do not think that I am dying; I have often been worse than this — much worse before. I have many years to live, and we will be so happy at the Abbey, and Gerard shall live with us — come hither, Gerard, and take Mary's hand — you love one another; love on, but be warned by my sad fate. — Why do you weep, my children? Ye have come back to me after an absence of fifteen years, and why do you greet me with sobs? God, spare me yet a little while! I feel icy cold — and yet it cannot be death. Kiss me, my children, all of ye, for perhaps I am dying after all. God is just; I deserve it to the full; be sure of that — I deserve it to the full. And yet it is something to have seen you — to have blessed you — to have embraced you — to have felt your kisses on my lips — God! I am grateful for that. Thou art just and merciful, and thou art afraid that I shall sin again as I have sinned in my youth. My beloved ones, be warned — I am suffering for my iniquities — *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*"

“And yet I am not dying — it cannot be that I am dying with my long-lost children in my arms. My miseries did not kill me ; how then can I die of joy ? Too much happiness kills not — sweet Mary, kiss me again — I feel your cheek against mine ; how soft it is ! and now methinks I see you, for the film has passed away from my eyes, and yet I see you in the darkness — perhaps, it is not you, but your mother. My sweet children, you did not know your mother — oh ! you would have loved her so much — but it has pleased God to keep you from idols. Be sure that all He does is merciful—Gerard, be sure of that—if it pleases God to take me now, it is only an act of mercy—but, perhaps, He will spare me yet a little while. Now why are ye all weeping ? I hear sounds as of many people weeping—I do not weep, but rejoice. Ha, ha ! now laugh all of ye ! for mercy’s sake weep not aloud ; I cannot bear to hear you sobbing. My children — my beautiful children, I have lands and houses, and money — be happy ; I forgot it till now, and I scarce think that I can write. What does it matter ? Love is everything — love one another ; but hark ye, it is a good thing to love, but you must love God better than one another. I did not, and, therefore, I am dying — *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*

He never more spake word — and Michael and Ella were fatherless.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SELFISHNESS OF THE UNSELFISH ONE.

Love's heroism is equal to all acts,
But seldom to forbearance.

HORNE.

I HAVE brought my story well nigh to a close, and I fear that the little interest it possessed is almost wholly at an end. But the reader must bear with me yet a little while, whilst I make confession of a miserable error into which I was driven by my too impulsive nature—an error bitterly repented of—an error, which was atoned for by years of wretchedness, and almost crowned with a mortal catastrophe.

They, who have followed my adventures thus far, will scarcely charge me with being selfish by nature; selfish, assuredly I was not; but how truly has it been said that the most unselfish people often do the most selfish things.

Anstruther died, and was buried. They buried him in the chapel at Charlton Abbey; and Michael, for still I must call him by this name,—Michael was the chief mourner.

They searched for a will. I gave it as my opinion, that Anstruther had died intestate, for I had myself seen him, but a few weeks before his death, destroy the will that he had made in my favour. I was glad of this, for Michael was heir-at-law, and I did not anticipate any difficulty in establishing the legality of his claims.

They searched for a will, and, to my astonishment, they found one. They opened it; they read it aloud; and I, Gerard Doveton, was the owner of Charlton Abbey, and the successor to all Anstruther's wealth.

I was amazed, for Anstruther had promised that he would not renew the will that he had, at my instigation, destroyed. I knew not what to think of this. I took the document into my hand, but my brain swam dizzily round, and I could not decipher the characters of the will. I asked, "What is the date of this?" and they told me.

It was of a date anterior to that of the document which Anstruther had burnt. They had found it, after a long search, between the pages of a book; it was regularly signed, and there were many present to attest the authenticity of the hand-writing; nothing could be more clear and satisfactory, than the wording of it; there was a lawyer present, who gave it as his opinion that my title to the property could hardly be disputed by the most vexatious of cavillers.

After a little while I became more collected, and I read the will from beginning to end. I never felt so utterly ashamed of myself as I did at this moment. I was sinking beneath the weight of my imagined disgrace. I looked around me, and I thought that I beheld a sneer upon the face of every one present. The word "Legacy-hunter," seemed to be ringing in my ears. My head drooped, like the head of a detected criminal; and I longed to hurry away from the gaze of the by-standers, and to rush into utter solitude.

Then I thought of Michael and Ella—that I had cheated them out of their just inheritance, and that now they were destined to be beggars in the world. Michael was present; he sate beside me; he took me by the hand, and he spoke words of congratulation. I thought that

there was sarcasm in the tones of his voice, and irony in the words that he uttered. I thought that he was covertly reproaching me, and taunting me for the part that I had acted. His very look was a silent malediction. I could not bear it; the load was too heavy for me, and I gasped out "It is a forgery — a forgery!"

All present were thunder-struck by this strange exclamation. Michael laid his hand gently upon my arm, and said, "Gerard, what do you mean?" The old Steward, who had sworn to the handwriting of his master, declared that he was ready to repeat the oath an hundred times over; and the lawyer, looking searchingly into my face, said, "A forgery, Mr. Doveton!—by *whom*?"

"Oh! not by me. I know nothing about it—at least, nothing more than what I will now tell you. Some weeks ago—it was in the month of November, Mr. Anstruther hinted to me, that he had made me his heir. I besought him to destroy the will; he hesitated, and I threatened to quit the house instantly, if he did not comply with my wishes. He obeyed; with manifest reluctance he committed the document to the flames; I saw it reduced to ashes—no vestige of it was left—then I elicited a promise from him, that he would never renew the document that he had thus, at my bidding, destroyed. The promise was

given, and I confided in it; but I see, to my bitter mortification, that it has been broken, and that I have been forced into the possession of property, the acceptance of which I have striven most industriously to avoid."

"But this deed bears a prior date."

"Ah! true, I forgot, and therefore it is null and void."

"It is the last existing testament; and valid," returned the lawyer, smiling at the false conclusion, into which I had leaped so hastily; "it seems more than probable, that Mr. Anstruther, having mislaid this document, and searched for it in vain, was compelled to make another copy of the will, and that it was the second document that he destroyed."

"Nothing can be clearer, Mr. —."

"And to this accident you are indebted——"

"Indebted to an accident! and do you think, Sir, that I would take advantage of such an accident, and defraud the rightful heirs of their property?—not I, Sir—not if those heirs were strangers to me, and the property far greater than it is. *Indebted to an accident!*—I should loath myself for ever if, sheltering myself behind the letter of the law, I were to commit an outrage upon justice and honour, and become a thief—yes, man of law, a thief! No, Sir—*thus*, and *thus*, and *thus*, I prove to you that I am not so pitiful

a scoundrel," and saying this, I took the will into my hand, and tore it into small pieces, which I threw upon the floor, and stamped upon, with the wild energy of a mad-man.

"Now, Michael—behold your property—you are heir to the Charlton estates."

Michael threw himself into my arms, overcome by the intensity of his feeling, and sobbed like a young child.—

On the following morning they sought me, but found me not. I had left Charlton Abbey, suddenly—and returned to Sir Reginald Euston.

Having acquainted the good Baronet with all that had passed since I quitted Fox Hall, I reminded him of his promise to obtain me an appointment. "Let it be something," said I, "that will take me abroad."

"Abroad!" exclaimed the Baronet, with a gesture of astonishment—"and leave Ella Moore—I mean, Mary Anstruther!"

"It is for this very purpose that I am anxious to leave England."

"Gerard, what can you mean? Have you quarrelled with her? Has she offended you? or, are you mad?"

"Not one of these things, Sir Reginald."

"She surely has not cast you off, Gerard?"

“ Oh ! no—she is as humble in her prosperity as she was of old, in her lowly condition. But I absolve her of her engagements—she is free to choose amongst others. I am not a fit mate for the wealthy Mary Anstruther, though I was for the poor Ella Moore. The rich and the great will court her ; amongst these she will doubtless find one more worthy than I am to be her partner through life. Oh ! pleasant, indeed, it was to feel assured of the purity and devotedness of my young affection, when Ella Moore was a simple cottage girl, and the world thought her unfit to be my bride. This delight can no longer be mine.

“ Ella is wealthy, and I am poor. I have nothing to offer her, but my love, which will ever remain unaltered. I have left her—and she is free to choose. I have left her without one word at parting ; and it may be, that I shall never see her again. I am not a fortune-hunter, Sir Reginald. I have not been toiling all this time, to prove that Michael and Ella are the children of Mr. Anstruther, for my own sake—no ; not because I have looked upon Ella Moore as my affianced bride—neither destroyed I Mr. Anstruther’s will, knowing that through another channel the property would ultimately come to me. No, Sir Reginald ; I have been sincere in all my

doings; and nothing that I have done has been for my own sake."

"Who doubts it, Gerard? — not they — not Michael and Ella, I am sure."

"Oh! but I shall suspect myself — and this is far worse than others suspecting me."

"Gerard, Gerard — you must not do this — you will break Mary Anstruther's heart."

"And my own — yet, nevertheless it must be done — for a beggar cannot well go courting an heiress, and I think it would be cruel, Sir Reginald, to remind Ella of any absurd expressions of affection, which she chanced to let fall when she was a little girl; and a cottager, having never received kindnesses from others, and thinking in her ignorance of humanity that I was the most glorious creature in the universe. Now she will go into the world and find herself mistaken — she will see others far above me in all that adorns mankind — she will see others whom she will admire — she will respect more — she will love more, and shall I —"

"Nay, Gerard, you are ungenerous at the very moment when you think that you are exhibiting your generosity. I tell you, and I speak seriously, that you are about to do a most selfish action, and the main-spring thereof is pride."

"Then you will not aid me?" I said, petulantly.

"Yes; Gerard — I have promised so to do, and

I will keep my promise ; but what is it that you want ?”

“ Could you procure me a diplomatic appointment ?”

“ Perhaps — ”

“ I should like to go abroad as attaché to some embassy. I care not whither I go, as long as I leave England.”

“ Oh ! remain at home, Gerard ; you know not what you are doing — you will destroy your own happiness, and that of her whom you most love.”

“ I am not yet old enough to marry.”

“ That is true.”

“ And ’tis a good thing — an excellent thing for young men to travel.”

“ But renew your vows to Mary ere you go.”

“ Let me be absent a little while,” said I, “ let me go abroad, if only for a year or two. When I return peradventure I shall not be a beggar — I may haply be on the high-road to fortune. Then I will enter the lists against others and begin the work of courtship anew.”

“ You talk like a madman, Gerard ; the young maiden’s heart is yours, and will be whether you marry her or not. As to the other matter, a year or two of travel will not injure you ; but return to Mary, and tell her of your plans, and ask her acquiescence ; for a young gentleman engaged can do nothing without the sanction of his mistress.”

But I was obstinate. I thought that I was acting aright, and the arguments of the good baronet were unavailing to save me from the pitfalls of error. I fell — a self-torturer I tortured others. It was indeed a grievous mistake, but I paid the penance of it throughout months — nay, indeed throughout years — of suffering.

I went to Petersburg as an attaché to the suite of the Ambassador. I wrote to Mary Anstruther before I went; told her that she was absolved from all her promises, and entreated her to think of me as one no longer in the land of the living.

She did — but she was faithful to my memory — a widowed heart mourning for its buried love, and like Marianna in the poem,

She only said, "My life is dreary ;

He cometh not," she said.

She said, "I am aweary — I am aweary ;

I would that I were dead !"

CHAPTER XX.

THE DROP-CURTAIN.

All yet seems well; and if it ends so meet,
The bitter past, more welcome is the sweet."

SHAKESPEARE.

YET not thus shall my history end —

Again in my native country — again in my uncle's house — again sitting beside Ella Moore — behold me, reader, two years having passed since last you heard of me — two years of sorrow and repentance.

Ella Moore — yet now, methinks, I ought to write *Mary Anstruther* — is on a visit to her dear friend Emily Pemberton. It is plain that sickness and sorrow have of late been her portion,

for her face is pale, and her frame is attenuated ; but she is lovely as in the days of her health and tranquillity, ere the canker-worm had eaten into her heart.

“And will you forgive me, Mary?” I asked looking into her face with tearful eyes, and an expression of penitent entreaty. “I have erred, nay, I have sinned grievously ; but you are kind and good, and you will forgive me — I know that you will forgive me, my Mary.”

“Oh ! Gerard, I am too happy now to utter one word of reproach. I almost think that the present joy atones for the past anguish. You will not leave us again, Gerard — you must not leave us again.”

“I will *never* leave you again, sweetest, without your permission — a permission which, methinks, I shall never ask. Will you make a like promise, my Mary ? Ah ! that look — I have seen it once — I know how to interpret that look — you *will* promise ! Then henceforth Mary we will be separable only by death.”

Mary spake not ; she put her little hand into mine, and laid her head upon my shoulder. I twined my arms around her ; I pressed her to my bosom ; I kissed her again and again. I was so purely happy——Day after day passed by us and saw no diminution of our happiness — no diminution of our love. I was no longer a beggar with-

out prospects — I was on the high-road to fortune and to fame. The Ambassador, to whose suite I had been attached was now in England, and a Minister of State. I had found favour in his sight, and he had made me his private secretary.

Michael was at Oxford. He had found little difficulty in establishing his claims to the Anstruther estates. They had been opposed by a distant relative of the deceased, but the opposition had been over-ruled. I have no little pleasure in stating, that my friend John Smith took part in the legal proceedings, as junior counsel in behalf of Michael and Ella, and that he acquitted himself in a manner "creditable to himself, and satisfactory to his employers." When I heard of this I did not fail to remind him that he had once said to me, "If ever you give me a brief when I am called to the bar, give me a better case than this, or never employ me as your counsel."

Few things afforded me more pleasure in a small way than laughing at the man of sense. The joke was generally against me; when it was in my favour, I made the most of it.

Sir Reginald, or perhaps I ought to say Lady Euston, had presented Lawrence Moore with a cornetcy in a cavalry regiment, and in a little time after this, Michael — or rather Edwin Anstruther — purchased for his foster-brother a lieutenancy.

Little Beau-pied was at school. They called

her Emma Jones, but none ever knew her proper title. She spent her holidays at the rectory, and I know not that she ever yearned after kindred. They told me that she was an apt scholar, and she sang like a young syren. In process of time she became Mrs. Lawrence Moore.

I have said that Michael was at Oxford. Ella and I looked forward with throbbing hearts to the approaching vacation, as we had agreed to postpone our nuptials till that season. The season arrived. My uncle Pemberton performed the ceremony. Sir Reginald Euston gave away the bride. My cousin Emily was one of the bridesmaids, and I thought that it would not be very long before *she* would stand at the altar as a bride.

All my family came up from Devonshire to be present at the ceremony. The Miss Dovetons were the Miss Dovetons still. Arthur was in the "upper remove;" he had grown very plain, and he wore a tail-coat. Walter, I am sorry to say, was not yet entitled to be denominated "the captain."

John Smith was at the wedding. He rejoiced, unaffectedly, in my good fortune; and as I talked over the adventures of my life, he said to me, "In this your romance I have been a spectator, but in nowise an actor. I have watched your goings on, but had no share in your adventures. I have been as a sort of chorus to your drama—

every now and then making my comments, but never mingling in the business of the scene."

And now I have done — yet, stay ; for I have hinted my suspicions that Emily Pemberton would soon be a wife — and she is one. There are fine merry-makings at Charlton Abbey, such as have not been seen there for years. The young squire has brought home his young bride, and a more beautiful couple have seldom been welcomed by the huzzas of a kind-hearted tenantry. And who is she who sits smiling beside the young lord of Charlton Abbey — whose bright, beaming face is that looking out of the carriage-window ? It is the face of my cousin Emily.

And now Reader, I have brought my history fairly to a conclusion. I once intended to have explained to you the meaning of it ; but I leave it, without comment, to its fate. Some, I doubt not, will dive deeper than the surface ; but they will be few, very few indeed ; for there are not many who, like Gerard Doveton, "behold qualities not persons, wide principles and not narrow details." And least of all in the pages of a romance does the world strive to burrow after wisdom. I almost fear I have spoken in parables to no purpose. The age of allegory is at an end.

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